THE Plain Mans Path-way TO HEAVEN.

WHEREIN

Every man may clearly see whither he shall be saved or damned.

Set forth Dialogue-wise: for the better understanding of the simple.

BY

Arthur Dent, Preacher of the Word of God at *South-Shoeberry* in *Essex*.

Corrected and much amended; with a Table of all the principal matters; and three Prayers, necessary to be used in private Families, hereunto added by the same Author.

Zephaniah. 3. 5.

Every morning the Lord bringeth his judgment to light, he faileth not: but the wicked will not learn to be ashamed.

LONDON:

Printed for *John Wright* at the *Crown* on *Ludgate-Hill*, 1682.

BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Right Worſhipful, Sir *Julius Cæſar* Knight, one of the Maſters of the Requeſt to the Kings Majeſty, Judge of the High Court of Admiralty, and Maſter of St. *Katherines*: *A. D.* wiſheth all good things in Chriſt Jeſus.

HAving finiſhed (*Right Worſhipful*) and made ready for the Preſs this Dialogue, I bethought me (ſith the common manner of all that write any Books in this age, is to dedicate the ſame to one or other of great place) to whom I might dedicate theſe my poor Labours. At laſt, I did reſolve with my ſelf, none to be more fit than your Worſhip, both in regard of ſome affinity in the fleſh, as alſo becauſe of thoſe manifold good parts, wherewith the Almighty hath endued you. Having therefore none other thing to preſent your Worſhip withal (in token of a thankful heart for your courteſies ſhewed towards me) behold I do here ſend unto you this third fruit of my labour publiſhed: moſt humbly beſeeching you to take it in good worth: not weighing the value of the thing, (which is of no value) but the ſimple and good mind and meaning of the giver.

This work doth ſharply reprove and evict the world of ſin, and therefore is like to find many deadly enemies, which with cruel hatred will moſt eagerly purſue it unto death. Zoilus alſo and his fellows, I know, will bitterly carp at

it: therefore it flyeth unto your worship, for protection, and humbly desireth to take sanctuary under your wings. Wherefore I humbly intreat you to take upon you the Patronage and Defence of it, that by your means it may be delivered both from the calumnious Obloquies of evil disposed persons, and also from the worlds malignity, so as it may take no injury. And concerning this little volume, the sum of the matter of it, you shall find in the Epistle to the Reader. *As concerning the manner, here is no great matter of Learning, Wit, Art, Eloquence, or Ingenious Inventions, (for I have herein specially respected the ignorant and vulgar sort, whose edification I do chiefly aim at;) yet somewhat there is which may concern the learned, and give them some contentment. Whatsoever it be, I leave it with your Worship, beseeching you to give it entertainment. And so I do most humbly take my leave, commending both your self, your good wife, and your whole family, to the merciful protection of the ever living God.*

20 MA 59

From *South-Shoobery* in *Essex.*
April 10. *An. Dom.* 1601.

Your Worships to command
in the Lord,

ARTHUR DENT.

The

The Epistle to the Reader.

GEntle Reader, seeing my little Sermon of Repentance, some few years since published, hath been so well accepted of, I have for thy further good, published this Dialogue, being the third fruit of my labour; wishing it the like success, that God thereby may have the glory, and thou, who art the Reader, comfort. I have in one part of this Dialogue, produced some of the antient Writers, and some of the wise Heathen also, to testifie upon their Oath in their own language, and to bear witness of the uglines of some Vices, which we in this age might make light of; which I wish may not be offensive to any. In other parts of this work I do in a manner relinquish them. But in this case I have in my weak judgement thought them to be of some good use, to shew forth thus much, That if we do not in time repent, forsake our sins, and seek after God, both the Antient Christian Fathers (whose eyes saw not that we see, nor their ears heard what we hear) yea, the very Heathen also shall rise up in judgement against us. Let none therefore stumble at it. But if any man do, let him remember, I am in a Dialogue, not in a Sermon. I write to all of all sorts; I speak not of some few of one sort. But that which is done herein, is not much more than that of the Apostle, (*as some of your own Poets have said*, Act. 5. 17.) which is warrantable. One thing dear Christian I pray thee, let me beg of thee; to wit, that thou wouldst not read two or three leaves of this Book, and so cast it from thee; but that thou wouldst read it throughout, even to the end: For I do assure thee, if there be any thing in it worth the reading, it is bestowed in the latter part thereof, and most of all towards the conclusion. Be not discouraged therefore at the harshness of the beginning; but look for smoother matter in the midst, and most smooth in the perclose and winding

of all. For this Dialogue hath in it, not the nature of a Tragedy, which is begun with joy, and ended with sorrow; but a Comedy, which is begun with sorrow, and ended with joy. This Book meddleth not at all with any controversies in the Church, or any thing in the state Ecclesiastical, but onely entreth into a Controversie with Satan and Sin. The Authour of all blessing give a blessing unto it. The God of peace, which brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, make us perfect in all good works, sanctifie us throughout, amend all our imperfections, and keep us blameless until the day of his most glorious appearing. Amen.

Thine in the Lord, A. D.

20 MA 59

The Contents of this Dialogue.

First, it sheweth mans misery by nature, with the means of recovery.

Secondly, it sharply inveigheth against the iniquity of the time, and common corruptions of the world.

Thirdly, it sheweth the marks of the children of God, and of the reprobates; with the apparent signs of salvation and damnation.

Fourthly, it declareth how hard a thing it is to enter into life, and how few shall enter.

Fifthly, it layeth open the ignorance of the world, with the objections of the same.

Last of all, it publisheth and proclaimeth the sweet promises of the Gospel, with the abundant mercies of God to all that repent, believe, and turn truely unto him.

The

The Plain Man's Pathway to *Heaven*.

Interlocutors.
- *Theologus*, a Divine.
- *Philagathus*, an honest man.
- *Asunetus*, an ignorant Man.
- *Antilegon*, a Caviller.

Phil. WEll met, *good Mr.* Theologus.

Theol. What, mine old friend *Philagathus*! I am glad to see you in good health.

Phil. *Are you walking, Sir, here all alone in this pleasant meadow?*

Theol. Yea, for that I take some pleasure at this time of the year, to walk abroad in the fields for my recreation, both to take the fresh air, and to hear the sweet singing of birds.

Phil. Indeed, Sir, it is very comfortable, especially now in this pleasant moneth of May *and thanks be to God, hither we have had a very forward Spring, and as kindly a season as came this seven year.*

Theol. God doth abound towards us in mercies: O that we could abound towards him in thanksgiving!

Phil. *I pray you, Sir, what a clock hold you it?*

Theol. I take it to be a little past One; for I came but even now from dinner.

Phil. But behold, yonder come two men towards us; what be they, I pray you?

Theol. They be a couple of neighbours of the next Parish: the one of them is called *Asunetus*, who in very deed is a very ignorant man in Gods matters, and the other is called *Antilegon*, a notable Atheist, and caviller against all goodness.

Phil. *If they be such, it were good for us to take some occasion to speak of matters of Religion: it may be we shall do them some good.*

Theol. You have made a good motion; I like it well therefore you will minister some matter, and move some questions, I will be ready to answer in the best sort I can.

Phil. *But stay, Sir, lo here they come upon us.*

Theol. Welcome, good neighbours, welcome. How do you, *Asunetus*, and you *Antilegon?*

Asun. well God be thanked: and we are glad to see your Mastership in good health.

Theol. What make both of you here at this time of the day? There is some occasion, I am sure, draweth you this way.

Asun. *Indeed sir, we have some little business; for we came to talk with one of your Parish about a Cow we should buy of him.*

Theol. Hath my neighbour a Cow to sell?

Antil. *we are told he hath a very good one to sell; but I am afraid at this time of the year we shall find dear ware of her.*

Theol. How dear? What do you think a very good Cow may be worth?

Antil. *A good Cow indeed at this time of the year is worth very near four pound, which is a great price.*

Theol. It is a very great price indeed.

Phil. *I pray you Sir.* Theologus, *leave off this talking of Kine, and worldly matters, and let us enter into speech of matters of Religion, whereby we may do good, and take good of one another.*

Theol. You say well: but it may be these mens business requires haste, so as they cannot stay.

Asun. *No, Sir, we are in no great haste; we can stay two or three hours, for the daves are long: if we dispatch our business by night, it will serve our turn well enough.*

Theol. Then if it will please you to walk to yonder Oak-tree, there is a goodly Arbour, and handsom seats, where we may all sit in the shadow, and confer of heavenly matters.

Asun. *With good will, sir,*

Phil. *Come then, let us go.*

Asun.

Asun. *This is a goodly Arbour indeed, and here be handsom seats.*

Theol. Sit you all down, I pray you. Now, friend *Philagathus* if you have any questions to move of matters of Religion, we are all ready to hear you.

Phil. *It may be these men are somewhat ignorant of the very principles of Religion, and therefore I think it not amiss to begin there, and so to make way for further matters.*

Theol. I pray do so then.

Phil. *First then, I demand of you in what state all men are born by nature.*

Theol. In the state of condemnation; as appears, *Eph.* 2. 3. *We are by nature the children of wrath as well as others.* And again, it is written, *Behold, I was born in iniquity, and in sin hath my mother conceived me. Ps.* 51. 5.

Phil. *Is it every mans case? Are not Dukes and Nobles, Lords, and Ladies, and the great Potentates of the earth exempted from it?*

Theol. No surely: it is the common case of all, both high and low, rich and poor; as it is written, *what is man, that he should be clean, and he that is born of a woman that he should be just?*

Phil. *From whence commeth it, that all men are born in so woful case?*

Theol. From the fall of *Adam*, who thereby hath not onely wrapt himself, but all his posterity in extream, and unspeakable misery, as the Apostle saith *By one mans disobedience, many were made sinners.* And, *By the offence offence of one, the fault came upon all men to condemnation,* Rom. 5. 1.

Phil. *What reason is there that we all should thus be punished for another mans offence?*

Theol. Because we were then all in him, and are now all of him: that is, we are so descended out of his loyns, that of him we have not onely received our natural and corrupt bodies, but also by propagation have inherited his foul corruptions, as it were by hereditary right.

Phil. *But for as much as some have dreamed that Adam by his fall himself onely, and not his posterity;*

and

and that we have his corruption derived unto us by imitation, and not by propagation: therefore I pray you ſhew me this more plainly.

Theol. Even as great Perſonages by committing of Treaſon, do not onely hurt themſelves, but alſo ſtain their blood, and diſgrace their poſterity (for the children of ſuch Nobles are diſ-inherited, whoſe blood is attainted, till they be reſtored again by act of Parliament:) even ſo our blood being attainted by *Adams* tranſgreſſion, we can inherit nothing of right, till we be reſtored by Chriſt.

Phil. *Doth this hereditary infection and contagion overſpread our whole nature?*

Theol. Yes truly, it is univerſal, extending it ſelf throughout the whole man, both ſoul and body, both reaſon, underſtanding, will, and affections: for the Scriptures avouch, that *we are dead in ſins and Treſpaſſes*, Eph. 2. 1. Col. 1. 2.

Phil. *How underſtand you that?*

Theol. Not of the deadneſs of the body, or the naturall faculties of the ſoul, but of the ſpiritual faculties.

Phil. *Did* Adam *then looſe his nature, and deſtroy it by his fall? or is our nature taken away by his fall?*

Theol. Not ſo: our Nature was corrupted thereby, but not deſtroyed; for ſtill there remaineth in our Nature, Reaſon, Underſtanding, Will, and Affections, and we are not as a block or a ſtock, but by *Adams* diſobedience we are blemiſhed, maimed, and ſpoiled of all ability to underſtand aright, or to will and do aright; as it is written, 2 Cor. 3. 5. *We are not ſufficient of our ſelves to think any thing as of our ſelves; but our ſufficiency is of God.* And again, *Phil.* 2. 13. *It is God which worketh in you, both the will and the deed, even of his good pleaſure.* And as concerning the other point, St. *James* ſaith, *That all men are made after the ſimilitude of God.* (*Jam.* 3. 9.) meaning thereby, that there remain ſome reliques and parts of Gods Image even in the moſt wicked men; as reaſon, underſtanding, &c. ſo that our nature was not wholly deſtroyed.

Phil.

Phil. *Then you think there be some sparks and remnants left in us still of that excellent image of God which was in our first creation.*

Theol. I think so indeed; and it may plainly appear unto us in the wise speeches and writings of Heathen Poets and Philosophers: in all which we may, as by certain ruines, perceive what was the excellent frame and building of mans creation.

Phil. *Can a man please God in any thing which he doth, so long as he continueth in the state of nature.*

Theol. No, not in any thing: for till we be in the state of grace, even our best actions are sinful, as preaching, prayer, almsdeeds, *&c.* as it is written: *Who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean? Job* 14.4. The Apostle also saith, *They that are in the flesh, cannot please God, Rom.* 8.8. that is, such as are still in their natural corruption. And our Lord Jesus himself saith, *Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Mat.* 7. 16. meaning thereby that meer natural men can bring forth no fruits acceptable to God.

Phil. *This is a very harsh and hard saying. I pray you for my further instruction make it more plain.*

Theol. Men in the state of nature may do those things which of themselves are good; but they do utterly fail in the manner of doing them; they do them not as they should be done. that is, in faith, love, zeal, conscience of obedience, *&c.* Neither yet with any chearfulness, delight or feeling; but even as it were forcing themselves to do the outward actions. Thus did *Cain* sacrifice, the Pharisees pray, *Ananias* and *Saphira* give alms, and the *Jews* offer up their oblations and burnt offerings.

Phil. *Have men any true sight, or lively and sound feelling of this misery, and woeful estate, so long as they be meerly natural?*

Theol. No surely, but are altogether blinded and hardned in it, being nothing desirous to come out of it, but do greatly please themselves in it, and can hardly be perswaded that they are in any such woefull

case:

caſe: as appeareth plainly in the example of that Ruler, who being commanded, or rather required of our Saviour Chriſt to keep the Commandments, anſwered, *All theſe have I kept from my youth, Luke* 8. 21. And again, although the Church of *Laodicea*, was wretched, miſerable, poor, blind, and naked, yet ſhe thought her ſelf rich, encreaſed with goods, and wanting nothing. It followeth then, that ſo long as men are in the ſtate of nature, they have no true ſight, and feeling of their miſeries.

Phil. *Do you think, that all men, being meerly natural are under the curſe of the Law?*

Theol. Yes certainly: and not onely ſo, but alſo under the very tyranny and dominion of Satan, though they know it not, feel it not, ſee it not, or perceive it not; for all that are not in Chriſt, are under the curſe of the Law, and the power of Darkneſs, and the Devil: as appeareth, *Epheſ.* 2. 2. where the Devil is called the Prince that ruleth in the Air, even the ſpirit that now worketh in the Children of diſobedience, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. In another place he is called the God of this world, who blindeth the eyes of all unbelievers. And again it is ſaid, That all men naturally are in his ſnare, being taken captive of him at his will.

Phil. *Few will be perſwaded of that; they will ſay, they deſie the Devil, and thank God they were never troubled with him.*

Theol. Their hot words do nothing amend the matter, for the Devil is no more driven away with words, than with holy water; but he ſitteth in the tongues and mouths, nay, poſſeſſeth the very hearts and entrails of thouſands, which ſay, They defie him, and are not troubled with him; as appeareth manifeſtly by their particular actions, and the whole courſe of their life.

Phil. *Methinks if the Devil do ſo inwardly poſſeſs the hearts and conſciences of men, they ſhould have ſome ſight and feeling of it.*

Theol. The working of the Devil in mens ſouls (being an inviſible Spirit) is with ſuch unconceivable ſleight

ſleight and crafty conveyance, that men in the ſtate of nature, cannot poſſibly feel it or perceive it: for how can a blind man ſee, or a dead man feel?

Phil. *Shew me this more plainly.*

Theol. Even as a crafty Juggler doth ſo preſtigate and blind mens outward ſenſes by the deluſions of Satan, that they think they ſee that which they ſee not, and feel that which they feel not: even ſo the Devil doth ſo delude and bewitch our inward ſenſes, and the natural faculties of our ſouls, that we having a miſt caſt before our eyes, think we are that which we are not, ſee that which we ſee not, and feel that which we feel not. For the deep cunning of Satan lieth in this, that he can give us our deaths wound, and we ſhall never know who hurt us.

Phil. *Few will believe this to be true.*

Theol. True indeed; for few will believe the Scriptures; few will believe this, becauſe few feel it. Where it is not felt, it can hardly be belived. Oneh the Elect do feel it, and therefore onely the Elect do believe it. As for all others, they are the very Prentices and Bond-ſlaves of the Devil, which is a thouſand times worſe than to be a gally-ſlave.

Phil. *How long do men continue in this woful ſtate of nature, being under the curſe of the Law, and the very ſlavery of Satan and ſin?*

Theol. Till they be regenerate and born again, and ſo brought into the ſtate of grace; as our Lord ſaith, (*Joh.*3.3.) *Except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God.*

Phil. *Do not many dye, and depart this life before they be born again, and conſequently, before they be brought into the ſtate of grace?*

Theol. Yes no doubt, thouſands; for many live forty or threeſcore years in this world, and in the end dye, and go out of this life, before they know wherefore they came into it; as it is written, (*Hoſ.*4.6.) *My people periſh for want of knowledge.*

Phil. *What may we think of ſuch?*

Theol.

Theol. I quake to ſpeak what I think: for ſurely I do not ſee how ſuch can be ſaved. I ſpeak not now of infants and children, whereof ſome, no doubt, are ſaved by vertue of the promiſe and covenant, through the election of grace.

Phil. *It ſeemeth then that you think none can be ſaved, but thoſe only which are born again.*

Theol. I think ſo indeed.

Phil. *I pray you tell me what the ſame regeneration and new birth is, whereof you ſpeak.*

Theol. It is a renewing and repairing of the corrupted and decayed eſtate of our ſouls; as it written, *Be ye changed by the renewing of your mind, Rom.* 12. And again, *Be renewed in the ſpirit of your mind, Eph.*4. 2, 3.

Phil. *Explain this more fully.*

Theol. Even as the wild Olive retaineth his old nature, till he be grafted into the ſweet Olive, but afterward is partaker of a new nature; ſo we, till we be grafted into Chriſt, retain our old nature, but afterward we are turned into a new creature; as it is written, *if any man be in Chriſt he is a new creature, 2 Cor.* 5. 17.

Phil. *I underſtand not what you ſay.*

Theol. You muſt know this, that as there is a natural birth of the whole man; ſo there is alſo a ſpiritual birth of the whole man.

Phil. *How is that?*

Theol. When as the natural faculties of the ſoul, as reaſon, underſtanding, will and affections, and the members of the body alſo are ſo ſanctified, purged and rectified by grace, that we underſtand, will, and deſire that which is good.

Phil. *Cannot a man will and deſire that which is good before he be born again?*

Theol. No more than a dead man can deſire the good things of this life. For mans will is not free to conſent to good, till it be enlarged by grace, and an unregenerated man doth ſin neceſſarily, though not by conſtraint. For mans will is free from conſtraint, (for it ſinneth of it ſelf) but not from thraldom unto ſin.

Phil.

Phil. *You speak as if a man could do no other thing but sin till the new work be wrought in him.*

Theol. That is my opinion indeed. For a man and his flesh are all one, till he be regenerate; they agree together like man and wife, they joyn together in all evil, they live and dye together: for when the flesh perisheth, the man perisheth.

Phil. *Is not this regeneration a changing, or rather destroying of humane nature?*

Theol. Nothing less; it is neither an abolishing, nor changing of the substance of body or soul, or any of the faculties thereof, but onely a rectifying and repairing of them, by removing the corruption.

Phil. *Is then our natural corruption so purged and quite removed by the power of grace, as that it remaineth not at all in us, but that we are wholly freed of it?*

Theol. Not so; for the reliques, and remnants, of our old nature, which the Scripture calleth the old man, do hang about us, and dwell in us, even until our dying day; as it is plainly proved in the ten last verses of the 7th to the *Romans*.

Phil. *Then you affirm, that this new man, or new work of grace and regeneration, is unperfect in this life.*

Theol. Yea, for the new creature or new work of grace can never be fully fashioned in this life, but is alwaies in fashioning. And as our faith and knowledge in this life are imperfect, so is our regeneration and sanctification.

Phil. *You said before, that the regeneration or new birth is of the whole man; which speech seemeth to imply, that the new work of grace is entire and perfect.*

Theol. You mistake the matter. For although the new birth is universal, and of the whole man; yet it is not entire, perfect, pure, and without mixture of corruption; for it is written, *The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.* The Apostle also prayeth that the *Thessalonians* may be sanctified throughout, in spirit, soul, and body.

Phil. *This seemeth very obscure; I pray you make it more plain.*

Theol.

Theol. You muſt note this, that the new work and the old, fleſh and ſpirit, grace and corruption, are ſo intermingledly joyned together in all the faculties of the ſoul and body, as that the one doth ever fight againſt the other.

Phil. *But tell me, I pray you, how you underſtand this intermingling of grace and corruption in the ſoul. Do you mean that grace is placed in one part of the ſoul, and corruption in another, ſo as they be ſundred in place?*

Theol. No, that is not my meaning; but this, that they be joyned and mingled (as I ſaid) in and throughout the whole man. For the mind or underſtanding part is not one part fleſh, and another ſpirit; but the whole minde mind is fleſh, and the whole mind is ſpirit, partly one, and partly another. The ſame is to be ſaid of the will and affections.

Phil. *I pray you expreſs it more plainly.*

Theol. Even as the air in the dawning, the day is not wholly light, or wholly dark, as at mid-night, or at noon-day; neither is it in one part light, and in another part dark, but the whole air is partly light and partly dark throughout; and as in a veſſel of luke-warm water, the water it ſelf is not onely cold, but heat and cold are mixed together in every part of the water, ſo is the fleſh and the ſpirit mingled together in the ſoul of man. And this is the cauſe why theſe two contrary qualities fight together.

Phil. *Out of doubt this doctrine of regeneration is a very great myſtery.*

Theol. Yes certainly, it is a ſecret of ſecrets, which the wiſe of this world cannot comprehend.

Phil. *Some think that courteſie, kindneſs, good nurture, good nature, and good education, are regeneration; and that courteous and good natured men, muſt needs be ſaved.*

Theol. They are generally deceived; for theſe things do not neceſſarily accompany ſalvation, but are to be found in ſuch as are altogether profane and irreligious: yet we are to love ſuch good outward qualities, and the men in whom we find them.

Phil.

Phil. *What say you then to learning, wit and policy? Are not these things of the essence of Religion, and prove a Regeneration?*

Theol. No, no; for they be external gifts which may be in the most wicked men; as in Papists, Heathen Poets, and Philosophers, yet we are greatly to reverence learned and wise men, although the new and inward work be not as yet wrought; for that onely is of God that is from above.

Phil. *The common people do attribute much to learning and policy; for they will say, Such a man is learned and wise, and knoweth the Scriptures as well as any of them, and yet he doth not thus and thus.*

Theol. It is one thing to know the History and Letter of the Scripture, and another thing to believe and feel the power thereof in the heart, which is only from the sanctifying spirit which none of the wise of this world can have.

Phil. *It is a common opinion, that if a man hold the truth in judgement, be no Papist or Heretick, but leadeth an honest civil life, then he must of necessity be saved.*

Theol. That followeth not; for many come so farre, which yet notwithstanding have not the inward touch.

Phil *That seemeth strange. For many will say, As long as they be neither whore nor thief, nor spotted with such like gross sins, they trust in God they shall be saved.*

Theol. They erre, not knowing the Scriptures. For many thousands are in great danger of losing their souls for ever, which are free from such notorious and horrible vices: nay, many which in all the world are counted good honest men, good true dealers, good neighbours, and good townsmen.

Asun. *I pray you, sir, give me leave a little. I have heard all your speech hitherto, and I like reasonable well of it; but now I can forbear no longer, my conscience urgeth me to speak: For methinks you go too far, you go beyond your learning in this, that you condemn good neighbours and good townsmen. You say, Many such men are in danger of loosing their souls; but I will never believe it while*

while I live: For if such men be not saved, I cannot tell who shall.

Theol. But you must learn to know out of the Scriptures, that all outward honesty and righteousness, without the true knowledge and inward feeling of God, availeth not to eternal life; As our Saviour Christ saith, *Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, Matth.* 5. 20. It is also written, (*Act.* 17. 13.) that when *Paul* preached at *Berea*, many honest men and women did believe; that is, such as were outwardly honest, or honest to the world only; for they could not be truly and inwardly honest before they did believe. Therefore you see that this outward honesty and civility, without the inward regeneration of the Spirit, availeth not to eternal life; and then consequently, all your honest world men are in great danger of losing their souls for ever.

Asun. *What sound reason can you yield, why such honest men should be condemned?*

Theol. Because many such are utterly void of all true knowledge of God and his Word. Nay, which is more, many of them despise the Word of God, and hate all the zealous Professors of it. They esteem Preachers but as Pratlers, and Sermons as good Tales; they esteem a Preacher no more than a Shoomaker, they regard the Scriptures no more than their old Shooes. What hope is there then I pray you that such men should be saved? Doth not the Holy Ghost say, *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?*

Asun. *You go too far, you judge too hardly of them.*

Theol. Not a whit. For all experience sheweth, that they mind, dream and dote of nothing else day and night, but this world, lands and leases, grounds and livings, kine and Sheep, and how to wax rich. All their thoughts, words and works, are of these and such like things. And their actions do most manifestly declare, that they are of the earth, and speak of the earth, and there is nothing in them but earth, earth.

As

As for Sermons, they care not how few they hear. And for the Scriptures they regard them not, they read them not, they esteem them not worth the while, there is nothing more irksome unto them; they had rather pill straws, or do any thing, than hear, read, or confer of the Scriptures, And, as the Prophet saith, *The word of the Lord is as a reproach unto men; they have no delight in it, Jer.6.10.*

Phil. *I marvel much, that such men should live so honestly to the world-ward.*

Theol. No marvel at all; for many bad men, whose hearts are worm-eaten within; yet for some outward and carnal respects, do abstain from the gross act of sin; as for some credit, some for shame, some for fear of Law, some for fear of punishment; but none for love of God, for zeal of conscience, or of obedience. For it is a sure thing, that the wicked may have that spirit which doth repress, but not that which doth renew.

Phil. *It seemeth then by your speeches, that some which are not regenerate, do in some things excel the children of God.*

Theol. Most certain it is, that some of them in outward gifts, and the outward carriage of themselves do go beyond some of the Elect.

Phil. *Shew me, I pray you, in what gifts.*

Theol. In learning, discretion Justice, temperance, prudence, patience, liberality, affability, kindness, courtesie, good nature, &c.

Phil. *Methinks it should not be possible.*

Theol. Yes truely: for some of Gods dear Children, in whom no doubt the inward work is truly and soundly wrought yet are so troubled and incumbred with a crabbed and crooked nature, and so clogged with some master sin, as some with anger, some with pride, some with covetousness, some with lusts, some one way and some another; all which breaking out in them, do so blemish them and their profession, that they cannot so shine forth unto men, as otherwise no doubt they would:

would: and this is their wound, their grief, and their heart-ſmart, and that which coſteth them many a tear, and many a prayer; and yet can they not get the full victory over them, but ſtill they are left in them, as a prick in the fleſh to humble them.

Phil. *Yet love ſhould cover a multitude of ſuch infirmities in Gods Children.*

Theol. It ſhould do ſo indeed: but there is great want of love, even in the beſt; and the worſt ſort eſpying theſe infirmities in the godly, run upon them with open mouth, & take upon them to condemn them utterly, and to judge their hearts, ſaying, They be hypocrites, diſſemblers and there is none worſe than they.

Phil. *But do you not think, that there be ſome counterfeits even amongſt the greateſt profeſſors.*

Theol. Yes, no doubt, there be and alwayes have been ſome very Hypocites in Church, but we muſt take heed of judging and condemning all for ſome, For it were very much to condemn Chriſt and his eleven Diſciples becauſe of one *Judas*; or the whole Primitive Church, for one *Ananias* and *Saphira*.

Phil. *But I hope you are of this mind, that ſome regenerate men, even in outward gifts, and their outward carriage, are comparable with many others.*

Theol. Queſtionleſs very many. For they being guided by Gods Spirit, and upheld by his grace, do walk very uprightly and unblamably towards men.

Phil. *Yet there reſteth one ſcruple; for it ſeemeth very ſtrange unto me, that men of ſo diſcreet carriage as you ſpeak, and of ſo many good parts, ſhould not be ſaved. It is great pity ſuch men ſhould be damned.*

Theol. It ſeemeth ſo unto us indeed; but God is onely wiſe. And you muſt note, that as there be ſome infirmities in Gods children, which he correcteth with temporal chaſtiſements, and yet rewardeth their faith, love, and inward ſervice and obedience with eternal life, ſo there be ſome good things in the wicked, and them that are without Chriſt which God rewardeth with temporal bleſſings, & yet puniſheth them eternally

for

for their unbelief and hardneſs of heart:

Phil. *Now you have reaſonably well ſatisfied me touching the doctrine of regeneration, and the manifold errours and deceits, that are in it, and of it. I pray you let us now proceed; and firſt of all tell me by what means the new birth is wrought.*

Theol. By the preaching of the word, as the outward means; and the ſecret work of the Spirit, as the inward means, 1 *Pet.*1.2,3. *Joh.*1 5. *Act.*10.44. *Eph.*4.3.

Phil. *Many hear the Word preached, and are nothing the better, but rather the worſe; what I pray you, is the cauſe of that?*

Theol. Mens own incredulity and hardneſs of heart, becauſe God in his wrath leaveth them to themſelves, and depriveth them of his Spirit, without the which all preaching is vain. For except the Spirit do follow the Word into our hearts, we can find no joy, taſte nor comfort therein, *Act.*16.14.

Phil. *Cannot a man attain unto regeneration and the new birth, without the Word and the Spirit.*

Theol. No verily. For they are the inſtruments and means whereby God doth work it.

Antil. *Why may not a man have as good a faith to Godward that heareth no ſermons, as he that heareth all the Sermons in the world?*

Theol. Why may not he that eateth not meat, be as fat and as well-liking, as he that eateth all the meat in the world? for is not the preaching of the Word the food of our ſouls?

Antil. *I like not ſo much hearing of Sermons, and reading of the Scriptures, except men could keep them better.*

Theol. Faithful and honeſt hearers do therefore hear, that they may be more able to obſerve and do; for a man cannot the will of God before he know it, and he cannot know it without hearing and reading.

Antil. *I marvel what good men do get by gadding to Sermons, and poring ſo much in the Scripture; or what are they better than others? there are none more full of envy and malice than they: they will do their neighbour a*

ſhrewd

ſhrewd turn as ſoon as any body; and therefore in mine opinion, they be but a company of hypocrites and preciſe fools.

Theol. You judge uncharitably. Full little do you know what they feel, or what good Gods people get by hearing of the Word. For the work of the Spirit in the hearts of the elect is very ſecret and altogether hid from the world; as it is written, (*Joh.* 3. 8.) *The wind bloweth where it liſteth, and thou hearest the ſound thereof, but canſt not tell whither it goeth, or whence it cometh; ſo is every man that is born of the Spirit.* And again, *The things of God knoweth no man, but the ſpirit of God.*

Antil. *Tuſh, tuſh, what needs all this ado? If a man ſay his Lords Prayer, his ten Commandments, and his Belief, and keep them, and ſay no body harm, nor do no body harm, and do as he would be done to, have a good faith to God-ward, and be a man of Gods belief, no doubt he ſhall be ſaved without all this running to Sermons, and pratling of the Scripture.*

Theol. Now you pour it out indeed: you think you have ſpoken wiſely. But, alas! you have bewrayed your great ignorance; for you imagine a man may be ſaved without the Word, which is a groſs error.

Antil. *It is no matter; ſay you what you will, and all the Preachers in the world beſides, as long as I ſerve God, and ſay my prayers duly and truely, morning and evening, and have a good faith in God, and put my whole truſt in him, and do my true intent, and have a good minde to God-ward, and have a good meaning, although I am not learned, yet I hope it will ſerve the turn for my ſouls health. For that God which made me, muſt ſave me, It is not you that can ſave me, for all your learning, and all your Scriptures.*

Theol. You may very fitly be compared to a ſick man, who having his brain diſtempered with heat, raveth, and ſpeaketh idlely he cannot tell what. For the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, (*Prov.* 28. 9.) *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer ſhall be abominable.* And again, (*Prov.* 13. 13.) *He that*

deſpiſeth

deſpiſeth the word, ſhall be deſtroyed. So long therefore as you deſpiſe Gods word, and turn away your Ear from hearing his Goſpel preached, all your Prayers, your fantaſtical ſerving of God, your good meanings, and your good intents are to no purpoſe; but moſt odious and loathſome in the ſight of God: as it is written, (*Iſa.* 1. 14. *My ſoul hateth your new moons, and your appointed feaſts; they are a Burthen unto me. I am weary to bear them. When you ſtretch out your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; and though you make many Prayers, I will not hear: for your hands are full of blood.* And again, the Lord ſaith by the ſame Prophet, (*Iſa.* 66. 3.) *He that killeth a bullock, is as if he ſlew a man; he that ſacrificeth a Sheep, as if he cut off a Dogs neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered ſwines blood: he that burneth incenſe, as if he bleſſed an Idol.* Where you ſee the Lord telleth you his mind touching theſe matters; to wit, that all your prayers, ſervices, good meanings, *&c.* are abominable unto him, ſo long as you walk in ignorance, profaneneſs, diſobedience and contempt of the Goſpel: for he ſaith in the words immediately going before, *To him will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my word.*

Aſun. *I grant indeed, for them that are idle, and have little to do, it is not amiſs now and then to hear a Sermon, and read the Scriptures: but we have no leiſure, we muſt follow our buſineſs, we cannot live by the Scriptures; they are not for plain folk, they are too high for us, we will not meddle with them, They belong to Preachers and Miniſters.*

Theol. Chriſt ſaith, (*Joh.* 10.) *My ſheep hear my voice, and I give unto them eternal life.* If therefore you refuſe to hear the voice of Chriſt, you are none of his Sheep, neither can you have eternal life. And in another place our Lord Jeſus ſaith, (*John* 8. 47.) *He that is of God, heareth Gods word. Ye therefore hear it not, becauſe ye are not of God.* St. *Paul* writing to all ſorts of men, both rich and poor, high and low, men

and

and women, young and old, exhorteth, (*Col.* 3. 16.) *that the word of Christ may dwell plenteously in them all, in all wisdom.* You see therefore that the Apostles would have all sorts of people that have souls to save, to be well acquainted with the Scriptures. Therefore you may as well say you will not meddle with God, with Christ, nor with everlasting life, as to say, you will not meddle with the Scriptures.

Asun. *Well, I cannot read, and therefore I cannot tell what Christ, or what St.* Paul *may say; but this I am sure of, that God is a good man (worshipped might he be) he is merciful, and that we must be saved by our good prayers, and good serving of God.*

Theol. You speak foolishly and ignorantly in all that you say, having no ground for any thing you speak, but your own fancy, and your own conceit: and yet you will believe your own fancy against all Preachers, and against all that can be spoken out of the Word. But I pray you give me leave a little: if a man dream that he shall be a King, and in the morning when he is awake, perswadeth himself it shall be so, may he not be justly laughed at as having no ground for it: Even so may all they which believe their own dreams and fantasies touching salvation. But it is true which *Solomon* saith, *Prov.* 14. 15. *A fool believeth every thing*: that copper is gold, and a counter an angel. And assuredly great reason there is, that he which will not believe God, should be given over to believe the Devil, his dream, and his fancy.

Asun. *I pray you instruct me better then.*

Theol. You had need indeed to be better instructed; for the Devil hath slily deluded your soul, and cast a mist before your eyes, making you believe the Crow is white, and that your estate is good before God, whereas indeed it is woful and miserable.

Asun. *I defie the Devil with all my heart. But I pray you, tell me how it comes to pass that I am thus deceived?*

Theol. This is it that deceiveth you and many others:

others: that you measure your selves by your selves, and by others, which is a false meet-wand. For you seem to lie straight, so long as you are measured by your selves, and by others, but lay the rule of Gods Word unto you, and then you lie altogether crooked.

Asun. *What other thing is there that deceiveth me?*

Theol. Another thing that deceiveth you is your own heart; for you know not your own heart, but are altogether deceived therein: (*Jer.* 17. 9.) *for the heart is deceivable above all things.* He is a wise man, and greatly enlightned, that knoweth his own heart. But you are blind, and know not what is within you; but dimly imagine you shall be saved, and hope you know not what of eternal life. And because blindness maketh you bold, you will seem to be resolute in words, and say, It is pitty he should live which doth any whit doubt of his Salvation. And assuredly you speak as you think, and as you know. For, for ought you know to the contrary, it seemeth so: though indeed and in truth it is not so: for you are deluded with a false light. And sometimes no doubt you have pricks, gripes, terrors and inward accusations of Conscience for all your bold and resolute Speeches.

Asun. *Truly I never heard so much before.*

Theol. That is because you shut your eyes, and stop your ears against God, and all goodness. (*Ps.* 58. 4, 5.) *You are like the deaf Adder, which heareth not the voice of the charmer, though he be most expert in charming.*

Asun. *well then, if it be so, I would be glad now to learn, if you would teach me. And as you have shewed me the means whereby the true birth is wrought, so now shew me the certain signs and tokens thereof; whereby all men may certainly know that they are sanctified, regenerate, and shall be saved.*

Theol. There be eight infallible notes and tokens of a regenerate mind, which may well be termed the eight signs of Salvation; and they are these. 1. *A love to the children of God.* 2. *A delight in his Word.* 3. *Often and fervent Prayer.* 4. *Zeal of Gods glory.*

5. *Denyal of our ſelves.* 6. *Patient bearing of the Croſs, with profit and comfort.* 7. *Faithfulneſs in our calling.* 8. *Honeſt, juſt, and conſcionable dealing in all our actions amongſt men.*

Phil. *Now that you ſhewed us the evident ſigns of mans ſalvation, ſhew us alſo the ſigns of condemnation.*

Theol. The Contraries unto theſe are manifeſt ſigns of Damnation. 1. *No love to the Children of God.* 2. *No delight in his Word.* 3. *Seldom and cold Prayers.* 4. *Coldneſs in God's matters.* 5. *Truſting to our ſelves.* 6. *Impatience under the Croſs.* 7. *Vnfaithfulneſs in our calling.* 8. *Unhoneſt and unconſcionable dealing.*

Phil. *No doubt, if a man be infected with theſe, they be ſhrewd ſigns that a man is extreamly ſoul-ſick, and in a very dangerous caſe. But are there none yet more evident and apparent ſigns of Condemnation than theſe?*

Theol. Yea verily, there be nine very clear and manifeſt ſigns of a mans condemnation.

Phil. *I pray you let me hear what they be.*

Theol. 1. *Pride.* 2. *Whoredom.* 3. *Covetouſneſs.* 4. *Contempt of the Goſpel.* 5. *Swearing.* 6. *Lying.* 7. *Drunkenneſs.* 8. *Idleneſs.* 9. *Oppreſſion.*

Phil. *Theſe be groſs things indeed.*

Theol. They may not unfitly be termed the nine *Belzebubs* of the world; and he that hath theſe ſigns upon him, is in a moſt woful caſe.

Phil. *What if a man be infected with ſome two or three of theſe?*

Theol. Whoſoever is infected with three of them, is in great danger of looſing his ſoul. For all theſe be deadly venome and rank poyſon to the Soul; and either the three firſt, or the three laſt, or the middle three, are enough to poyſon the ſoul, and ſting it to death. Nay, to ſay the truth, a man were as good gripe a toad, and handle a ſnake, as meddle with any one of theſe.

Phil. *Is every one of them ſo dangerous?*

Theol. Queſtionleſs: for they be the very plague-ſores of the ſoul. If any man have a plague-ſore upon

on his body, we uſe to ſay Gods tokens are upon him. Lord have mercy on him. So we may truly ſay, if any man be throughly and totally infected at the heart with any one of theſe, God's tokens are upon his Soul, Lord have mercy upon him.

Phil. *Many do not think theſe to be ſuch dangerous matters as you make them, and many there be which make light of them.*

Theol. True indeed, for the moſt part of men are altogether ſhut up in blindneſs and hardneſs of heart, having neither ſight nor feeling of their ſins, and therefore make light of them, thinking there is no ſuch danger.

Phil. *It is moſt certain, that men are given to leſſen and extenuate their ſins: or elſe to hide them, and daub them over with many cunning ſhifts and vain excuſes. For men are ever ready to take covert, and will writhe and wreath (like ſnakes) to hide their ſins: yea, if it were poſſible, to make ſin no ſin, to make virtue vice, and vice virtue. Therefore I pray you lay open unto me out of the Scriptures, the grievouſneſs, and uglineſs of their ſins.*

Theol. The ſtinking filthineſs of theſe ſins, is ſo great and horrible, that no tongue or pen of man is ſufficient fully to manifeſt and lay open the ſame, according to the proper nature and being thereof: yet notwithſtanding, I will do my endeavour to lay them open in ſome meaſure, that all men may the more loath them.

Phil. *I pray you then, firſt of all begin with pride.*

Theol. You ſay well; for that indeed may well ſtand in the fore-front: firſt it is a maſter-Devil, and the maſter-pock of the Soul.

Phil. *Shew me out of the Scriptures, that pride is ſo grievous and loathſome.*

Theol. Solomon ſaith, *Prov.* 16. 5. *Every one that is proud in heart, is an abomination to the Lord.* Which plainly ſheweth that God doth deteſt and abhor proud men. And is it not a fearful thing, think you,

to be abhorred of God? And in the ſame chapter verſe 18. he ſaith, *Pride goeth before deſtruction, and an high mind before a fall*; wherein he ſheweth, that pride is the fore-runner of ſome de adly down fall, either by diſgracing, or diſplacing: For it is an old and true Proverb, *Pride will have a fall.* And oftentimes, when men are moſt liſted up, then are they neareſt unto it: as the examples of *Haman, Nebuchadnezzar* and *Herod*, do plainly declare. When the milt ſwelleth, the reſt of the body pineth away, even ſo when the heart is puft up with pride, the whole man is in danger of deſtruction. Moreover, the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, (*Job.* 18. 5. 15.) *Job* ſaith of ſuch kind of men, *The ſpark of his fire ſhall not ſhine; fear ſhall dwell in* his houſe, *and brimſtone ſhall be ſcattered upon his habitation.* And in another place he ſaith, (*Job* 20. 26.) *The fire which is not blown ſhall devour him.* Methinks therefore, if there were any ſpark of grace in us, theſe terrible ſpeeches, of the Holy Ghoſt might ſerve to humble us, and pull down our pride, eſpecially ſith the Scriptures do affirm, that God reſiſteth the proud, and ſetteth himſelf *ex profeſſo* againſt them, and therefore wo unto them; for if God take againſt a man, who can reclaim him? For he doth whatſoever he will.

Phil. *But tell me I pray you, when you ſpeak againſt pride, what pride is that you mean.*

Theol. I mean all pride, both that which is inward in the heart, and that alſo which breaketh out in mens foreheads: I mean that which apparently ſheweth it ſelf in mens words and works.

Phil. *Do you mean pride alſo of mens gifts.*

Theol. Yes ſurely: for there is no pride worſe or more dangerous than that. Beware, ſaith one, of ſpiritual pride: as to be proud of our learning, wit, knowledge, reading, writings, ſermons, prayers, godlineſs, policy, valour, ſtrength, riches, honour, birth, beauty, authority. For God hath not given ſuch gifts unto men, to the end they ſhould make ſale-

ware

ware of them, and ſet them a ſun-ſhining to behold; ſeeking only themſelves with their gifts, the vain praiſe of the multitude and applauſe of the people, ſo robbing God of his honour, and proudly arrogating to themſelves, that which is due unto God, which is the praiſe of his gifts: But he hath given his gifts to another end, namely that we ſhould uſe them to his glory, and the good of others, (either in Church or Commonwealth) eſpecially of thoſe which do moſt concern us.

Phil. *Yet we ſee commonly men of greateſt gifts are moſt proud.*

Theol. True indeed, for the fineſt cloth is ſooneſt ſtained. And as worms ingender ſooner in ſoft and tender wood, than in that which is more hard and knotty; and as moths do breed ſooner in fine wool, than in courſe flocks: even ſo pride and vain glory do ſooner aſſault and excellent and rare man in all kind of knowledge and vertue, than another of meaner gifts: and therefore pride is ſaid to ſpring out of the aſhes of all vertues. For men will be proud, becauſe they are wiſe, learned, godly, patient, humble, *&c.* Pride therefore may very fitly be compared to the crab-ſtock ſpines, which grow out of the root of the very beſt Apple-tree. Therefore to ſay the truth, this is one of the laſt engines and weapons which the devil uſeth for the overthrowing of Gods own Children, even to blow them up with pride, as it were with gun-powder. For as we ſee it come to paſs in the ſiege of ſtrong holds, when no battery or force of ſhot will prevail, the laſt remedy and policy is to undermine it, and blow it up with trains of gun-powder: ſo when Satan can no way prevail againſt ſome excellent Servants of God, his laſt deviſe is to blow them up with pride, as it were with gun-powder.

Phil. *I ſee it is a ſpecial grace of God, for men of great gifts to be humble minded: and he is an odd man of a thouſand: which excelling in gifts, excelleth in humility; and the more gifts he hath, the more humbly he walks:*

not contemning others, but eſteeming them better than himſelf. For commonly we are the worſe for God's gifts, becauſe we have not the right uſe of them; and again, becauſe they ingender ſo much proud fleſh in us, that we had need dayly to be corzied. Therefore God ſheweth great favour and mercy to that man, whom he humbleth and taketh down by any afflictions or infirmities whatſoever. For otherwiſe it is ſure, proud fleſh would altogether overgrow us.

Theol. You have ſpoken the truth: for the Apoſtle himſelf confeſſeth that he was tempted and troubled this way, (2 *Cor.* 12.) and had like to have been puffed up out of meaſure with the abundance of his revelations, but that God in great mercy ſent him a cooler and a rebater, to wit, a prick in the fleſh, (which he calleth the Meſſenger of Satan) whereby the Lord cured him of his pride. And even ſo doth he cure many of us of our pride, by throwing us to Sathan, leaving us to our ſelves, and giving us over to commit ſome groſs evil, even to fall down and break our necks, and all to the end he may humble us, tame us, and pull down our pride, which he ſeeth we are heart-ſick of. It is good for us therefore to be humb'ed in the abundance of grace, that we be not proud of that which we have, or that which we have done. For humility in ſin, is better than pride in well-doing.

Phil. *Herein ſurely appeareth the great wiſdom and mercy of God: that he ſo graciouſly bringeth good out of evil, and turneth our afflictions, infirmities, falls and down-falls, to his glory, and our good.*

Theol. It is moſt true. For even as of the fleſh of a Viper is made a ſoveraign Medicine to cure thoſe which are ſtung of a Viper; and as Phyſitians expel poyſon with poyſon: ſo God according to his marvailous wiſdom, doth, of the infirmities which remain in us after Regeneration, cure other more dangerous diſeaſes; as pride, vain-glory, and preſumption. O bleſſed therefore be his Name, for ever, which thus

thus mercifully cauſeth all things to work together for the good of his own people, of whom theſe things are eſpecially to be underſtood.

Phil. *Is there no cauſe why men of great gifts ſhould glory in their gifts?*

Theol. No ſurely none at all. For the Apoſtle ſaith, (1 Cor. 4.) *Who ſeparateth thee?* And *what haſt thou that thou haſt not received? If thou haſt received it, why boaſteſt thou, as though thou hadſt not received it?* Where the Apoſtle plainly ſheweth that no man is to be proud of his gifts, becauſe they are none of his own; he hath but received them to uſe. We count him worthy to be laughed at as a fool, who having borrowed brave apparel of others (as a ſilken Gown, a ſatten Doubler, a chain of Gold, Velvet Breeches, *&c.*) ſhould proudly jet in the ſtreets in them, as if they were his own: even ſo are they worthy to be chronicled for fools, which are proud of good gifts, which are none of their own. Therefore the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſaith, *Thus ſaith the Lord, Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom, nor the ſtrong man in his ſtrength, neither the rich man in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he underſtandeth and knoweth me, Jer.* 9. 23. To this point alſo well ſaith the heathen Poet, (*Theocritus*) *No man can eſcape the puniſhment of pride; therefore in greateſt proſperity be not puffed up.*

Phil. *Yet it is a wonder to ſee how proud, ſurly, haughty, ſtately, inſolent, and thraſonical ſome be, becauſe of their gifts: they think they touch the clouds with their heads, and that the earth doth not bear them; they take themſelves to be petty Angels, or ſome wonderful wights: they contemn and diſdain all others which have not the like gifts: they do contemptuouſly overlook them, as a Lyon ſhould over-look a Mouſe, a King a Begger; or, as we ſay in a proverb, as the Devil looked over* Lincoln.

Theol. Oh proud duſt! Oh haughty worms meat! If they would bring their hearts before God, and their conſciences, thoughts and affections, to be judged by his law, it would ſoon cool them, and take them down

well enough; they ſhould ſee their wants and imperfections to be ſo great, that they indeed ſhould have no more cauſe to boaſt of their gifts than the Blackmore hath of his whiteneſs, becauſe his teeth are white. The Holy Ghoſt cutsall our combs, and plucketh down all pride of fleſh, when he ſaith, (*Job* 36. 26.) *How ſmall a thing doth man underſtand of God?*

Phil. *I pray you let us proceed to ſpeak of the outward and groſs pride of the world: and firſt of all tell me what you think of pride in apparel.*

Theol. I think it to be a vanity of all vanities, and a folly of all follies: for to be proud of apparel, is as if a thief ſhould be proud of his Halter, a beggar of his clouts, a child of his gay, or a fool of his bable.

Phil. *Yet we ſee how proud many (eſpecially Women) be of ſuch bables. For when they have ſpent a great part of the day in tricking and trimming, pricking and pinning, pranking and pouncing, girding and lacing, and braving up themſelves in moſt exquiſite manner, then out they come into the ſtreets, with their pedlers ſhop upon their backs, and carry their creſts very high, taking themſelves to be little Angels, or at leaſt ſome-what more than other Women. Whereupon they do ſo exceedingly ſwell with pride, that it is to be feared they will burſt with it as they walk in the ſtreets. And truly we may think, the very ſtones in the ſtreet, and the beams of the Houſes, do quake and wonder at their monſtrous, intolerable and exceſſive pride. For it ſeemeth that they are altogether a lump of pride, a maſs of pride, even altogether made of pride, and nothing elſe but pride, pride.*

Theol. You ſeem to be very hot in the matter.

Aſun. *Marry, ſir, I like him the better: for the world was never ſo full of pride as it is now adayes.*

Theol. Alas, alas; indeed who can hold his peace at the pride of this Age. What a thing is it, that fleſh and blood, worms meat, duſt and aſhes, dirt and dung, ſhould ſo brave it out with their trim clouts, and that in the ſight of God, Angels and Men: for the time will come, when both they and all their gay

gay clouts ſhall be buried in a grave: yea, as *Job* ſaith, (*Job.* 17. 13, 14.) *The Grave ſhall be their houſe, and they ſhall make their bed in the dark. And then they ſhall ſay to corruption, Thou art my Father: and to the worm, Thou art my Mother and my ſiſter.* What then ſhall it avail them thus to have ruffled it out in all their bravery, when as ſuddenly they ſhall go down to deſtruction? What did it profit the rich man to be ſumptuouſly cloathed, and fare deliciouſly every day, when his body was buried in the duſt, and his ſoul in hell-fire?

Aſun. *I pray you ſir, what ſay you to theſe great ruffs, which are born up with ſupporters and rebatoes, as it were with poſt and rail?*

Theol. What ſhould I ſay, but God be merciful unto us? For ſuch things do draw down the wrath and vengeance of God upon us all: and, as the Apoſtle ſaith, (*Col.* 3. 6.) *For ſuch things ſake, the wrath of God cometh upon the children of diſobedience.* And truly, we may well fear, that God will plague us for our abominable pride.

Aſun. *What ſay you then to theſe doubled and redoubled ruffs, (which are now in common uſe) ſtrouting fardingals, long locks, fore-tufts, ſhag hair, and all theſe new faſhions which are deviſed and taken up every day?*

Theol. I ſay, they are far from that plainneſs, ſimplicity and modeſty, which hath been in former ages: our fore-fathers knew no ſuch things. It is recorded of *William Rufus*, [*Grafton's* Chron.] ſometime King of this Land, that when his Chamberlain on a time brought him a new pair of hoſe, he demanded of him what they coſt; who anſwered, Three ſhillings: whereat the King, being ſomewhat moved, commanded him to prepare him a pair of a mark. If Kings were then thought to exceed, that beſtowed a mark upon a pair of hoſe, what is it to be thought of many mean men in theſe our days (yea, ſuch as have no living, and are ſcarce of a good calling) which beſtow as much upon a pair, as the King did upon two,

when he was thought moſt of all to exceed? But alas, alas, we have paſſed all bounds of modeſty and meaſure; there is no hope with us, Our Land is too heavy of this ſin. For the pride of all Nations, and the follies of all Countries are upon us; how ſhall we bear them? And as for theſe new faſhions, the more new they be, the more fooliſh, and as fooliſh they that uſe them. For with our new faſhions we are grown clean out of faſhion. If we had as many faſhions of our bodies, as we have of our attyre, we ſhould have as many faſhions as fingers and toes. But vain men and women do apparently ſhew their vain minds by following ſo greedily ſuch vain toys and faſhions.

Aſun. *It was never a good world ſince ſtarching and ſteeling, buſks and whale-bones, ſupporters and rebatoes, full moons and hobby-horſes, painting and dying, with ſelling of favour and complexion, came to be in uſe. For ſince theſe came in, covetouſneſs, oppreſſion, and deceit have increaſed. For how elſe ſhould pride be maintained? And ſure it is, within theſe ninety years theſe things were not known, nor heard of. And what ſay you then to painting of faces, laying open of naked breaſts, dying of hair, wearing of Periwigs, and other hair-coronets, and top-gallants?*

And what ſay you to our artificial women, which will be better than God hath made them? They like not his handy-work, they will mend it, and have other complexions, other faces, other hair, other bones, other breaſts, and other bellies than God made them.

Theol. This I ſay that you and I, and all the Lord's people, have great and juſt cauſe of mourning, weeping, and lamentation, becauſe ſuch abomination is committed in *Iſrael.* (*Pſal.* 119.) *David's* eyes guſhed out with Rivers of tears, becauſe men kept not God's Laws, and an horrible fear came upon him, becauſe men forſook the law of God. (*Jer.* 9. 1.) *Jeremiah* did ſigh in ſecret, wiſhing that his head were full of water, and his eyes a fountain of tears, becauſe

cauſe of the ſins of the people. (*Neh.* 1. 4.) *Nehemiah* mourned for the tranſgreſſion of God's people. *Lot*'s juſt ſoul was vexed with the unclean converſation of the *Sodomites*? And ſhall we mourn nothing at all for theſe things? Shall we be no whit grieved for the pride of our Land? Shall we ſhed no tears for ſuch horrible and intollerable abominations? They are odious in the ſight of God and men: the air ſtinketh of them. It is God's marvellous patience that the Devil doth not carry them away quick, and rid the Earth of them: or that fire and brimſtone doth not come down from Heaven, and conſume them.

Antil. *You are too hot in theſe matters of attire: you make more of them than there is cauſe.*

Aſun. *I con him thanks: God's bleſſing on his heart, I ſhall love him the better while I know him, becauſe he is ſo earneſt againſt ſuch ſhameful and deteſtable pride. Is it not a ſhame that Women profeſſing true Religion, ſhould make themſelves ſuch Pictures, Puppets, and Peacocks as they do? And yet I hear few Preachers in the Pulpit ſpeak againſt it.*

Antil. *I marvel you ſhould be ſo earneſt in matters of apparel. You know well enough that apparel is an indifferent thing: and that Religion and the Kingdom of God doth not conſiſt in theſe things.*

Theol. I know right well that apparel in its own nature is a thing indifferent: but lewd, wanton, immodeſt and offenſive apparel is not indifferent. For all ſuch abuſe taketh away the indifferency of them, and maketh them ſinful, and as ill by circumſtance. For otherwiſe why ſhould the Lord threaten by his Prophet, that he would viſit the Princes, and the Kings Children, and all ſuch as were cloathed with ſtrange apparel, that is, the faſhions of other Countries? *Zephan.* 1. 8. Again, why ſhould the Lord ſo plague the proud dames, and mincing minions of *Jeruſalem*, for their pride and vanity in attire, if there were no evil in ſuch kind of abuſe? The Lord ſaith thus, in the third of *Eſay* againſt thoſe brave and gallant

dame, *Becauſe the Daughters of Sion are haughty, and walk with ſtretched-out necks, and with wandring eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and make a tinkling with their feet; therefore ſhall the Lord make the heads of the Daughter of Sion bald, and the Lord ſhall diſcover their ſecret parts. In that day ſhall the Lord take away the ornament of the ſlippers, and the cauls, and the round tires, the ſweet balls, and the bracelets, and the bonnets, the tires of the head, and the ſlops, the head-bands, and the tablets, the ear-rings, the rings, and the mufflers, the coſtly apparel, and the veils, and the wimples, and the criſping pins, and the glaſſes, and the fine linnen, and the hoods, and the lawns. And inſtead of ſweet ſavour, there ſhall be ſtink; and inſtead of a girdle, a rent; and inſtead of dreſſing the hair, baldneſs; and inſtead of a a ſtomacher, a girding of ſack-cloath: and burning inſtead of beauty. Then ſhall her Gates mourn and lament; and ſhe being deſolate ſhall ſit upon the ground.*

Thus we ſee how terribly the Lord threatneth the gallant dames of *Jeruſalem*, for their exceſſive and abominable pride. And this may well be a mirrour, for the proud minions of our age; which aſſuredly may well fear, the Lord will bring ſome ſuch judgment upon them as he did upon the daughters of *Jeruſalem*. For their ſin is as great in this kind, as was the Daughters of *Sion*, and God is the ſame God now that he was then to puniſh it?

Antil. *Tuſh, never ſpeak ſo much of theſe matters of apparel; for we muſt do as others do, and follow the faſhion, or elſe we ſhall not be eſteemed.*

Theol. If you follow them not, you ſhall be more eſteemed of God, of his Angels, Saints, and all good men. As for all others, if you eſteem them more than theſe, you ſhew what you are.

Antil. *Well, for all that, ſay you what you will, pride is in the heart, and not in the apparel: for one may be proud of plain apparel, as well as of coſtly. And ſome are as proud of their falling bands and little ſets, as others are of their great ruffs.*

Theol.

Theol. You ſpeak fooliſhly, for how know you that? can you judge mens hearrts and inward affections? can you ſay when mens and womens apparel is ſober, modeſt and Chriſtian like, that they have proud hearts, and proud of that attire? You go very far indeed to judge the heart. You ought to judge charitably of ſuch as go ſoberly and modeſtly attired, even that their hearts is according unto their attire. And for you, we may rather think your heart is vain, light, and fooliſh, becauſe your attire doth ſtrongly argue it. And as the Prophet ſaith, *The tryal of your countenance teſtifieth againſt you: you declare your ſins as Sodom, and hide them not, Iſa.* 3. 9.

Phil. *I pray you then ſet down ſome Rules for apparel out of the Scriptures.*

Theol. I may well ſet down what I will: but ſurely moſt Men and women will do what they liſt. For verily it may be thought that many of this Age have for-ſworn God and his Word, and all goodneſs. For they are come to this point, let God ſay what he will. They will do what they liſt. For as the Prophet ſaith, *They have made a covenant with Hell, and with death, and are grown to an agreement, Iſa.* 28. 15. And I do verily think, if God himſelf ſhould come down from Heaven in his own perſon, and diſſwade men and women from this vanity of apparel, yet would they ſtill uſe it, as it were in deſpight of God, and, as it were, to anger him the more. For they are ſo extraordinarily enamoured, and ſo immoderately delighted with it, and do ſo continually and altogether dote on it, and are ſo wood-mad of it, that they will have it, though men and Angels, and all the world ſay nay: nay, which is more, though they ſhould go to the Devil quick with it. And therefore it is but loſt labour to ſpeak againſt it, preach againſt it, or write againſt it. It is but to plow the Sea, or knock at a deaf mans door; for there is no hope of any Reformation. Only this we gain, that the world is reproved and convicted of ſin. And theſe things

ſhall

ſhall ſtand in a record againſt them, in the laſt day: ſo that they may ſay they had a fair warning, and that there was a Prophet among them.

Phil. *Yet for all this, I pray you ſet us down ſome Directions and Rules out of Gods Holy Book, concerning attire. For albeit ſome be very bad and outragious in theſe things, yet there be ſome others which are well diſpoſed, and will (no doubt) make ſome Conſcience to frame themſelves according to the Rule of God's word.*

Theol. Well then for their ſakes which are well diſpoſed, I will ſet down ſome few directions. St. *Paul*, in 1. *Tim.* 2. 9. willeth that women ſhould array themſelves in comly apparel, with ſhamefaſtneſs and modeſty, as becometh Women that profeſs the fear of God: and not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or coſtly apparel. (1 *Pet.* 3. 3.) The Apoſtle St. *Peter* giveth like Rules alſo; for he ſaith, ſpeaking of Chriſtian Matrons, and Profeſſors of Holy Religion, That *their apparel muſt not be outward*, that is, not conſiſt ſo much in outward bravery; as *broidered hair, gold put about*, &c. *as it muſt be inward, that the hidden man of the heart may be cloathed with a meek and quiet ſpirit, which is a thing before God much ſet by. For after this manner*, ſaith he, *in times paſt the holy women which truſted in God, did attire themſelves*; as *Sarah, Rebecka, Rachel*, and ſuch like ancient and grave Matrons.

Phil. *Wherein doth this inward clothing ſpecially conſiſt?*

Theol. In four things, which are ſet down in the ſore named places, to wit, ſhamefacedneſs modeſty, a quiet Spirit, and a meek ſpirit.

Phil. *Theſe be fine ſuits of apparel indeed; I would all women would put them on, and never put them off, but wear them continually; for they are the better for wearing, though all other apparel be the worſe.*

Theol. If women would deck themſelves inwardly with theſe aforeſaid Vertues, they would be unto them as ornaments of Gold, and jewels of pearl.

(*Prov.*

(Prov. 31. 30.) For the woman that feareth the Lord ſhall be praiſed.

Phil. *But now, I pray you, Sir, ſet down your judgment for outward attire.*

Theol. This is all that I can ſay touching that point That it muſt be as the Apoſtle ſaith, comly, decent, handſome, neat, and ſeemly; not light, not wanton, not laſcivious, not immodeſt, not offenſive.

Phil. *But who ſhall judge what is comely, ſober, handſom, modeſt?* &c. *For every man and woman will ſay, their apparel is decent, and cleanly; how gallant, brave, and flaunting ſoever they be.*

Theol. Herein the examples of the moſt godly, wiſe, grave, and modeſt men and women are to be followed; for who can better judge, what is comely, ſober, and modeſt, than they?

Phil. *But we ſee ſome, even of the better ſort, in this matter are a little infected, run out, and go beyond their bounds.*

Theol. The more is the pity. But alas, we ſee the ſway of the time, and rage of the ſtream is ſo violent, that it carrieth before it, whatſoever is not ſettled, and very deep rooted. And ſome Godly and well-diſpoſed perſons, whoſe hearts are not with theſe things, but with God, are notwithſtanding perforce carryed away with the violence of the Wind and Tide; whoſe caſe, though it cannot well be defended or excuſed, yet it is to be pitied and lamented.

Phil. *Have you any further directions touching this point?*

Theol. There is one thing yet more to be added: to wit, that attire be according to mens places, callings, and degrees. For that is not ſeemly for one, that is ſeemly for another, that becomes not one mans place, becometh anothers: For that is not meet for poor men, which is meet for rich men: nor that meat for mean men, which is meat for men of more note and great place.

Phil. *Then you think it is lawful for Kings, Princes, and*

and great perſonages to wear pearl, gold, ſilver, and velvet, &c.

Theol. Queſtionleſs it is lawful for ſuch in ſober manner and meaſure to wear the moſt coſtly and precious things which the Earth can afford: and that to ſet out the Magnificence, Pomp, and Glory of their places: and therefore ſuch things are in them moſt comely and decent.

Phil. *But now adays few will keep within compaſs, few will know their places, but the moſt part run beyond their bounds, and leap quite out of their ſockets.*

Theol. True indeed: for now adays, mean Gentlewomen, yea, ſome Gentlewomen of their own making, will ruffle it, and brave it out in their attire like Counteſſes and Ladies of honour. Plain folk alſo in the Country, will flaunt it like Courtiers, and like good Gentlemen and Gentlewomen; and they ſeem to ſay in their hearts, Fie on this plainneſs, we will have no more of it, we will not take it as we have done: So that now the old Proverb is verified: *Every* Jack *will be a Gentleman, and* Joan *is as good as my Lady.* For now we cannot by their apparel, diſcern the Maid from the Miſtreſs, nor the waiting Gentlewoman from her Lady: And thus we ſee in this matter of apparel how all is out of joynt.

Phil. *Is there any more to be ſaid in this caſe?*

Theol. There is yet another thing to be reſpected in this matter of attire.

Phil. *What is that?*

Theol. That is to be according to mens abilities. For it is lamentable to conſider, how poor men and women, poor hired Servants, Milk-maids, and ſuch like, go quite beyond their abilities. And more lamentable to ſee what wretched and ill-favoured ſhifts they make to compaſs theſe things: ſo ſharp and ſo eagerly are they ſet upon them.

Phil. *Well ſir, now you have ſufficiently rolled the ſtone, and at large ſatisfied us touching the matter of Pride; which is the firſt ſign of condemnation. Now*

pro-

proceed to the ſecond, which is whoredom; and unfold unto us out of the Scriptures the danger thereof.

Theol. Solomon in his Proverbs ſaith, *(Prov. 22. 14.) That the mouth of a ſtrange Woman* [*or an Harlot*] *is as a deep pit; he that is a deteſtation to the Lord ſhall fall therein.* Wherein he plainly ſheweth, that thoſe whom God deteſteth, and is exceeding angry with, are given over to this Vice. And in another place, he ſaith, *(Prov. 23. 27.) A whore is a deep ditch, and as a narrow pit.* Noting thereby, that if a man be once fallen in with an Harlot, he ſhall as hardly get out again, as a man that is plunged into a very deep and narrow pit, where he can ſcant ſtir himſelf. The ſame *Solomon* in the Book of *Eccleſiaſtes* yields us the reaſon hereof, namely, becauſe ſhe is as nets, ſnares, and bands, wherein if a man be once taken, he is faſt enough for getting out. *(Eccleſ. 7. 26.) I find,* ſaith he, *more bitter than death, the woman whoſe heart is as nets and ſnares, and her hands as bands. He that is good before God, ſhall be delivered from her; but the ſinner ſhall be taken by her.* We do therefore plainly ſee in what a labyrinth and dangerous caſe they be that are left of God, and given over to Whoredom and Harlots: and therefore it is ſaid, *(Prov. 6. 25.) Deſire not her beauty in thine heart, neither let her eye-lids catch thee: for by a whoriſh woman, a man is brought to a morſel of bread; and the Adultreſs hunteth for life which is precious.* And again he ſaith, *(Prov. 5. 3, 4.) Albeit the lips of an harlot drop as an hony-comb, and the roof of her mouth is ſofter than Oyl; yet her latter end is as bitter as Wormwood, and as ſharp as a two edged Sword.* All theſe prudent Speeches of the Holy Ghoſt, do moſt evidently ſhew unto us what a fearful thing it is to commit whoredom, and ſo to fall into the hands of Whores and Harlots. Therefore *Job* ſaith of the wicked, (*Job. 36. 14.*) *Their Soul dyeth in youth, and their life among the whoremongers.*

Phil. *You have very well ſhewed out of God's Book, the great danger of Whoredom and Adultery. And it is greatly*

greatly to be lamented, that men in this age make ſo light of it as they do, and that it is ſo common a vice; nay that ſome (alas with grief I ſpeak it!) do profeſs it, live by it, and proſtitute themſelves wholly unto it.

Theol. Such men and Women may juſtly fear the plaguing hand of God; for the plaguing hand of God: for the Lord ſaith by his Prophet; (*Jer.* 5. 7.) *Though I fed them to the full, yet they committed adultery, and aſſembled themſelves by companies in harlots houſes. They roſe up in the morning like fed Horſes, for every man neighed after his Neighbours wife. Shall I not viſit for theſe things ſaith the Lord? ſhall not my ſoul be avenged on ſuch a Nation?*

Phil. *Methinks if men were not altogether hardned in this ſin, and even paſt feeling, and paſt grace, this threatning and thundring of God himſelf from Heaven ſhould terrifie them.*

Theol. A man would think ſo indeed: but now we may take up the old complaint of the Prophet, *I hearkned and heard, and loe no man ſpake aright, no man repented him of his evil, ſaying, What have I done? Every one turneth to their race, as the horſe ruſheth into the battel.*

Antil. *Tuſh, Whoredom is but a trick of youth, and we ſee all men have their imperfections.*

Theol. You ſpeak prophanely and wickedly: For ſhall we count that but a trick of youth, for the which the Lord ſmote three and twenty thouſand of his own people in one day? (1 *Cor.* 10. 8.) Shall we count that but a trick of youth, for the which the Lord threatned *David* his own Servant, that the Sword ſhould never depart from his houſe? (2 *Sam.* 12. 10.) Shall we count that a trick of youth, for the which *Hamor* and *Sechem*, the Father and the Son, with many other, both men, women, and children were cruelly murthered, by *Simeon* and *Levi*, the Sons of *Jacob*? (*Gen.* 34. 25.) Shall we count that but a trick of youth, for the which the Lord ſlew *Hophni* and *Phineas*, the two Sons of *Eli* the Prieſt in the battel of the Philiſtines?

liſtines? 1 *Sam.* 4. 11. Shall we thus ſet all at ſix and ſeven, and make light of ſuch horrible Villainies? Doth not the ſeverity of the puniſhment, ſhew the greatneſs of the ſin?

Doth not the Apoſtle ſay, 1 *Cor.*10. 11. *Theſe things came unto them for our examples, upon whom the ends of the world are come*? And yet you paſs it over with a tuſh, and a trick of youth, as if God were to be dallied with. No, no, be not deceived, God is not mocked. They which will not be moved now in hearing, ſhall one day be cruſhed in pieces in feeling And they which now call whoredom a trick of youth. ſhall one day howl and cry, yell and yelp for ſuch tricks, with wo and alas that ever they were.

Antil. Oh ſir, you muſt bear with youth; youth you know is frail, and youth will be youthfull when you have ſaid all you can.

Theol. Yea but God doth allow no more liberty to youth, than unto age: but bindeth all upon pain of death, to the obedience of his Commandements. The Apoſtle ſaith, *Tit.* 2. 6. *Let young men be ſober minded. David* ſaith, *Pſal.* 119. 9. *wherewith ſhall a young man clanſe his way? in taking need thereto according to thy word.* The wiſe man ſaith *Eccl* 12. 1. *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth*: and further addeth, that if they will needs follow their luſts their Pleaſures and their own ſwing, yet in the end he will bring them to Judgement, arraign them, condemn them, and tame them in hell-fire well enough.

Phil. *Yet we ſee men are ſo violently carryed after their luſts, and ſo deſperately bent that they will have the preſent ſweet and pleaſure of ſin, come of it what will. Come ſickneſs, come death, come Hell, come damnation, they are at a point; they will pay the higheſt price for their luſt. They will purchaſe their pleaſures with the loſs of their ſouls, O wofull purchaſe! O damnable pleaſures!*

Theol. Sweet meat will have ſower ſauce, and a dram of pleaſure a pound of ſorrow. Such curſed caitifs

caitifs ſhall at laſt pay a dear ſhot for their pleaſures. Such deſperate wretches ſhall one day know (to their everlaſting wo) what it is to provoke God, and to ſin with ſo high an hand againſt him. They ſhall well know in ſpight of their hearts, that Vengeance is prepared for the wicked, and that there is a God that Judgeth the earth. Let all men therefore take heed in time; *for Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge.* Heb. 13. 4. And the Apoſtle ſaith flatly, *That Whoremongers and Adulterers ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God,* 1 Cor. 6. 9. *Let therefore no Fornicator, or unclean perſon be found among us, as was* Eſau. Heb. 12. 16. *But let us abſtain from fleſhly luſts, which fight againſt the Soul* 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. *And let every one know how to poſſeſs his veſſel in Holineſs and Honour, and not in the luſt of Concupiſcence, as the Gentiles which know not God,* 1 Theſ. 4. 4.

Herein let us conſider the wiſe ſpeech of an ancient Father: (Chryſ. *in* Mat.) *Sin, while it is in doing miniſtreth ſome pleaſure; but when it is committed, the ſhort pleaſure thereof vaniſheth away and long ſorrow cometh inſtead of it.* Neither let us reject the ſaying of a wiſe Heathen: (*Iſocrat. ad Demon.*): *Shun pleaſure for fear of ſmart. Sowr things follow ſweet, and joy heavineſs.*

Antil. *Yet for all this, you ſhall not make me belive, that whoredom is ſo hainous a matter. You make more of it than it is.*

Theol. True indeed: for you and ſuch as you are will belive nothing againſt your luſts and fleſhly delights: and that is the cauſe why you are to deaf on this ear. I will therefore add a word or two more (out of the Oracles of God) to that which hath been ſpoken. The wiſe King ſaith, *He that committeth Adultery with Women, deſtroyeth his own ſoul.* Prov. 6 32. and ſo is acceſſary to his own death; which is no ſmall matter. For we uſe to ſay, if a man hang himſelf, or drown himſelf, or any manner of way make away himſelf, that he was curſed of God, that Gods hand

was

was heavy againſt him, that the devil ought him a ſhame, and now he hath paid him. And all the Country rings of ſuch a ſtrange accident when and where it falleth out: and the Coroner of the Country doth ſit upon it. How much more may all the world wonder at this; that a man ſhould deſtroy his own ſoul, and wittingly and willingly caſt away himſelf for ever: Now the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, The Adulterer doth ſuch an act giveth ſuch a venture, and willingly murthereth himſelf. Oh therefore wo unto him that ever he was born! for ſure it is, the great Corner of Heaven, that crowns whom he will crown ſhall one day ſit upon it and give judgement. Moreover as the Adulterer ſinneth againſt his ſoul, ſo he alſo ſinneth againſt his body, after a ſpecial manner, as witneſſeth the Apoſtle 1 *Cor.* 6. 18. Alſo he ſinneth againſt his goods and outward eſtate, as the holy man *Job* teſtifieth, ſaying, *Adultery is a fire that devoureth to deſtruction, and it will root out all our increaſe.* *Job.* 31. 12. Furthermore, he ſinneth againſt his name. *For the Adulterer ſhall find a wound, and diſhonour; and his reproach ſhall never be put a way.* Prov. 6. 33.

Item, He ſinneth againſt his Wife, *who is his companion, and the wife of his covenant:* *Mal.* 2. 14, & 15. And God ſaith in the ſame place, *Let none treſpaſs againſt the Wife of his youth; keep your ſelves in your ſpirit, and tranſgreſs not.* Laſt of all, he ſinneth againſt his Children and poſterity, as the Lord ſaid to *David, becauſe thou haſt deſpiſed me, and done this, therefore the ſword ſhall never depart from thy houſe. Behold, I will raiſe up evil againſt thee out of thine own houſe,* 2 *Sam.* 12. 10. Now therefore to conclude this point, we may ſee how many deadly wounds men make themſelves by committing of Adultery: They wound themſelves in their ſouls: they wound themſelves in their bodies: they wound themſelves in their goods: they wound themſelves in their names: themſelves in their wives, and in their children.

What

What man, except he were ſtark mad, would thruſt in himſelf in ſo many places at one time? The Adulterer with his one ſin of Adultery, maketh all theſe deadly Wounds in himſelf: and it is an hundred to one he will never get them cured, but will dye, and will bleed to death of them. Lo thus you ſee the dangerous quality and condition of this ſin. Shall we now therefore make light of it? Shall we ſay, it is but a trick of youth? Shall we ſmooth over the matter with ſweet words, when the Holy Ghoſt maketh it ſo hainous and capital? Shall we make nothing of that which draweth down Gods wrath upon the ſoul, body, goods, name, wife and children? That were an intollerable blindneſs, and moſt extream hardneſs of heart. An ancient Writer hath long ago paſſed ſentence upon us, who make ſo light of this ſin: (for ſaith he) *Adultery is the very hook of the Devil, whereby he draweth us to deſtruction,* (Baſil *in Epiſt.*) And another Godly Father ſaith, *That Adultery is like a furnace, whoſe mouth is gluttony, the flame pride, the ſparkles filthy words, the ſmoak an ill name, the aſhes poverty, and the end ſhame, (Gregory)* And ſo we plainly ſee, that howſoever we regard not this ſin, but flatter our ſelves in it, yet thoſe whoſe eyes the Lord hath opened, have in all ages condemned is as moſt flagitious and horrible: yea, the very Heathen will riſe up in Judgment againſt us, who have ſpoken and written many things againſt this filthy and beaſtly Vice.

Phil. *Now indeed you have ſufficiently branded the vice of Adultery, and laid out the uglineſs thereof, that all men may behold it ſtark naked, and abhor it. If any man (notwithſtanding all this) will venture upon it, he may be ſaid to be a moſt deſperate Monſter. For what doth he elſe but (as it were) put his finger into the Lyons mouth, and (as it were) take the bear by the tooth? and they may well know what will follow, and what they may look for. Let all men therefore in time take heed to themſelves, and to their own ſouls, as they will anſwer it at their uttermoſt peril, at the dreadful day of Judgements, when the ſecrets*

ſecrets of all hearts ſhall be diſcloſed. But now one thing reſteth; to wit, that you ſhould ſhew us the ſpecial roots and cauſes of Adultery.

Theol. There be five ſpecial cauſes of it: The firſt is our natural corruption: for the very ſpawn and ſeed of all ſin is our corrupt nature: and this of all other is a moſt inherent ſin, as witneſſeth the Apoſtle *James*, ſaying, *When luſt hath conceived, it bringeth forth ſin: and ſin when it is perfected bringeth forth death, Jam.* 1. 15.

The ſecond is gluttony and fulneſs of bread: For when men have filled their bellies, and crammed their panches as full of good chear, wine, and ſtrong drink as their skins can hold, what are they meet for, or what mind they elſe, but adultery and uncleanneſs? And therefore well ſaith one, *Great nouriſhment, and groſs food is the ſhop of Luſt.* The Heathen Poet could skill to ſay, *Sine Cerere & Baccho friget Venus, Without meat and drink luſt waxeth cold.* And to this effect the wiſe King ſaith, (*Prov.* 23. 31, and 33.) *that their eyes ſhall behold ſtrange women, whoſe hearts are ſet upon wine and belly-chear.* And therefore he adviſeth all men, *not to look upon the wine when it appeareth red, when it ſheweth his colour in the cup*, or ſtirreth very kindly: and that for fear of this after-clap. An ancient Writer ſaith to the ſame purpoſe: [Gregor. Nazianz.] *He that delicately pampereth his belly, and yet would overcome the ſpirit of fornication, is like to him that would quench a flame of fire with oyl.*

Therefore to cloſe up this point, ſure it is, though men pray, hear, and read much, and be otherwiſe, well diſpoſed, yet except they be abſtemious in diet, they will be much troubled with Luſt.

The third cauſe of Adultery is idleneſs: for when men are lazy, luskiſh and idle, having nothing to do, they lye wide open to adultery, and luſt creepeth into them. Some Hiſtoriographers write the Crab-fiſh is very deſirous to eat Oyſters; but becauſe ſhe cannot perforce open them, ſhe watcheth her time when

when they open themſelves to the Sun after the tide, and then ſhe putteth in her claw, and pulleth out the Oyſter: Even ſo Satan watcheth his opportunity againſt us, that he may infect and breath into us all filthy luſts, and adulterous deſires, when we lye open unto him by idleneſs. Wiſely therefore to this point ſaith the Greek Poet: *Much reſt nouriſheth Luſt.* And another Poet [*Heſiodus*] ſaith:

Quæritur Ægyſtus quare ſit factus adulter:
In promptu cauſa eſt; deſidioſus erat.

Sloathful lazineſs is the cauſe of adultery. And therefore another ſaith, *Eſchew idleneſs, and cut the very ſinews of Luſt.* [Otia ſi tollas periêre Cupidinis arcus.]

The fourth cauſe of Adultery is wanton apparel: which is a minſtrelleſs, that pipes up a dance unto Whoredom. But of this enough before.

The fifth and laſt cauſe of Adultery, is the hope of impunity, or eſcaping of puniſhment. For many being blinded and hardned by *Satan*, think they ſhall never be called to any account for it; and becauſe they can blear the eyes of men, and carry this ſin ſo cloſely under a cloud, that it ſhall never come to light, they think all is ſafe, and that God ſeeth them not. And therefore *Job* ſaith, *The Eye of the Adulterer waiteth for the twie-light, and ſaith no Eye ſhall ſee me.* And in another place, *How ſhall God know? Can he judge thorow the dark Cloud?* But verily, verily, though the Adulterer do never ſo cloſely and cunningly convey his ſin under a Canopy, yet the time will come when it ſhall be diſcloſed to his eternal ſhame. *For God will bring every work to judgment, with every ſecret thought, whether it be good or evil.* (*Eccleſ.* 12. 14.) *For he hath ſet our moſt ſecret ſins in the ſight of his countenance.* (*Pſal.* 90.) *And he will lighten the things that are hid in darkneſs, and make the counſels of the heart manifeſt.* (1 *Cor.* 4.) For this cauſe *Job* ſaith, *When I ſin, thou watcheſt me, and will not purge me from my ſin.* (*Job.* 10. 14.)

Phil-

Phil. *Now you have ſhewed us the cauſes of Adultery, I pray you ſhew us the remedies.*

Theol. There be ſix remedies for adultery, which no doubt will greatly prevail, if they be well practiſed.

Phil. *Which be they?*

Theol. 1. Labour. 2. Abſtinence 3. Temperance. 4. Prayers. 5. *Reſtraint of our Senses.* 6. Shunning of Womens Company, and all occaſions whatſoever.

Phil. *Well ſir. now you have waded deep enough in the ſecond ſign of damnation: I pray you let us proceed to the third, which is Covetouſneſs. And as you have laid naked the two former, ſo I pray you, ſtrip this ſtark naked alſo, that all men may ſee what an ugly Monſter it is, and therefore hate it and abhor it.*

Theol. I would willingly ſatifie your mind; but in this point I ſhall never do it ſufficiently. For no heart can conceive, nor tongue ſufficiently utter the loathſomneſs of this Vice; for Covetouſneſs is the fouleſt Fiend, and blackeſt Devil of all the reſt. It is even the great *Belzebub* himſelf. Therefore I ſhall never be able fully to deſcribe it unto you: but I will do what I can to ſtrip and whip it ſtark naked. And howſoever the men of this Earth, and blind worldlings take it to be moſt ſweet, beautiful and amiable, and therefore do embrace it, entertain it, and welcome it, as though there were ſome happineſs in it: yet I hope when I have ſhewed them the face thereof in a glaſs (even the true glaſs of God's Word) they will be no more in ſuch love, but quite out of conceit with it. I will therefore hold out this glaſs unto them.

St. *Paul* to *Timothy*, brandeth this ſin in the forehead, and boareth it in the ears, that all men may know it and avoid it, when he ſaith, *Covetouſneſs is the root of all evil.* (1 *Tim.* 6. 10.) Our Lord Jeſus alſo giveth us a watch-word to take heed of it, ſaying, *Take heed and beware of Covetouſneſs.* (*Luk.* 12. 15.) As if he ſhould ſay, touch it not, come not near it; it is the very breath of the Devil; it is preſent death, and the very Rats-bane of the Soul. The Apoſtle

layeth out the great danger of this ſin, and doth exceedingly grind the face of it, when he ſaith, *That the end of all ſuch as mind earthly things is damnation.* (*Phil.* 3. 19.) Let all carnal worldlings and muckiſh minded men lay this to heart, and conſider well of it, leſt they ſay one day, Had I wiſt.

Phil. *Good Sir, lay open unto us the true nature of Covetouſneſs, and what it is, that we may more perfectly diſcern it.*

Theol. Covetouſneſs is an immoderate deſire of having.

Phil. *I hope you do not think frugality, thriftineſs and good husbandry, to be covetouſneſs.*

Theol. Nothing leſs: for they be things commanded; being done in the fear of God, and with a good Conſcience.

Phil. *Do you not think it lawful alſo for men to do their worldly buſineſs, and to uſe faithfulneſs and diligence in their callings, that they may provide for themſelves and their families?*

Theol. Yes no doubt; and the rather, if they do theſe things with calling upon God for a bleſſing upon the works of their hands, and uſe Prayer and Thankſgiving before and after their labour, taking heed all the day long of the common corruptions of the world, as ſwearing, curſing, lying, diſſembling, deceiving, greedy getting, *&c.*

Phil. *Wherein I pray you doth Covetouſneſs eſpecially conſiſt.*

Theol. In the greedy deſire of the mind. For we may lawfully do the works of our Calling, and play the good Husbands and good Houſe-wives: but we muſt take heed that diſtruſtfulneſs and inward greedineſs of the world do not catch our hearts. For then we are ſet on fire, and utterly undone.

Phil. *Sith Covetouſneſs is eſpecially of the heart, how may we know certainly when the heart is infected?*

Theol. There be four ſpecial ſigns of the hearts infection.

Phil. *which be they.*

Theol.

Theol. The first is an eager and sharp-set desire of getting. Therefore the Holy Ghost saith, *He that hasteth to be rich shall not be unpunished.* (*Prov.* 28. 22.) And again, *An heritage is hastily gotten at the beginning: but the end thereof shall not be blessed.* (*Prov.* 20: 21.) The Heathen man also saith, [Dem. in Olin. 2.] *No man can be both justly and hastily rich.*

The second is a pinching and niggardly keeping of our own: that is, when men (being able to give) will hardly part with any thing, though it be to never so holy and good use. And when at last, with much ado, for shame they give something, it cometh heavily from them (God wot) and scantly.

The third is the neglect of holy duties: that is, when mens minds are so taken up with the love of earthly things, that they begin to slack and cool in matters of God's Worship.

The fourth and last is a trusting in riches, and staying upon them, as though our lives were maintained by them, or did consist only in them: which thing our Lord Jesus flatly denyeth, saying, *Though a man have abundance, yet his life consisteth not in the things that he hath.* (*Luk.* 12. 15.)

These then are four evident signs and tokens whereby we may certainly discern that mens hearts and entrails are infected with covetousness.

Phil. *You have very well satisfyed us in this point, Now let us understand the original causes of Covetousness.*

Theol. There be two special causes of Covetousness: The one is the ignorance and distrust of God's Providence.

The other is the want of tasting and feeling of Heavenly things. For till men taste better things, they will make much of these: till they feel Heaven, they will love Earth: till they be religious, they will be covetous. Therefore the cause is soon espyed, why men are so sharp set upon these outward things, and do so admire riches, worldly pomp, pleasures, and treasures: Because they know no better, they never had taste nor feeling of those things which are eternal:

Phil. *Now as you have ſhewed us the cauſes of covetouſneſs, ſo let us alſo hear of the effects.*

Theol. Well, then will I briefly diſpatch them in order. And firſt of all, I reaſon from the words of the Apoſtle before alledged, that if Covetouſneſs and the love of money be the root of all evil, then it is the root of idolatry, the root of murther, the root of theft, the root of lying, the root of ſwearing, the root of ſimony, the root of bribery, the root of uſury, the root of Lawing, the root of all contentions in the Church, and the root of all babling and brawling in the Common-wealth. Moreover, it ſpreadeth far and near, it dwelleth in every Houſe, in every Town, in every City: it pryeth into every corner, it creepeth into every heart: it annoyeth our Phyſicians, it infecteth our Divines, it choaketh our Lawyers, it woundeth our Farmers, it baneth our Gentlemen, it murthereth our Tradeſmen, it bewitcheth our Merchants, it ſtingeth our Marriners. O Covetouſneſs, O Covetouſneſs! It is the poyſon of all things, the wound of Chriſtianity, the bane of all goodneſs. For Covetouſneſs marrs all; it marreth all every where, in all places, in all degrees, among all perſons. It marreth marriages; for it coupleth young to old, and old to young. It marreth Hoſpitality, it marreth all good Houſe-keeping, it marreth Almſ-deeds, it marreth Religion, it marreth Profeſſors, it marreth Miniſters, it marreth Magiſtrates, it marreth all things. And therefore what ſin ſo grievous, what evil ſo odious, what Vice ſo enormous as this? For this cauſe it was prettily ſaid of one, That all other Vices are but Factors for Covetouſneſs, and ſerve for Porters to fetch and bring in her living. She maketh ſimony her drudg, bribery her drudg, uſery her drudge, deceit her drudge, ſwearing her drudge, lying her drudge. O what a Devil incarnate is this, that ſetteth ſo many Vices a work, and hath ſo many Factors and underlings to ſerve her turn! And are they not in a pretty caſe think you, that are infected with this ſin? O they are in a moſt miſerable caſe. It had been good

they

they had never been born. For being alive, they are dead; I mean in their Soules. For covetousnes is Souls poyson, and Souls bane. Covetousnesse is the strongest poyson to the Soul that is. It is a confection of all the Spiders, Toads, Snakes, adders, Scorpions, Basilisks, and all other the most Venemous Vermine of the whole world. If the devil can get us to take down but one penny weight of it, it is enough, he desires no more, for presently we fall down starke dead: therefore the Apostle saith, *They that will be rich* (he meaneth in all haste, by hook or by crook) *fall into temptations, and snares, and into many foolish and noysome lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.* 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. For as Covetousnes is rank poyson to the Soul: so the Apostle compareth it to a deep gulf, wherein thousands are drowned. And therefore he addeth in the same place. *But thou, O man of God, flie these things.* In which Words he doth most gravely advise all the Ministers of the Word of God to take heed of it. For as it is dangerous in all men: so it is most dangerous and offensive in Preachers of the Gospel.

Phil. *Indeed it must needs be granted, that covetousnes is a very grievous sin: yea, even a Monster with seven heads. Yet for all that, we see in this our Iron Age, how many of all sorts are infected with it, and few will give any thing to an holy use. Most men now adays have nothing to spare for Christ, nothing for his Gospel, nothing for his Church, nothing for the poor Children of God, and needy members of Christ. Christ is little beholding unto them: for they will do nothing for him, no, not so much as speak a good word in his cause, or the cause of his poor Saints. Every little thing with them is too much for God, and good men. For when they come to giving unto holy and necessary uses, then they will stick at a penny, and grudge at a Groat, and every thing is too much: But to bestow upon themselves, nothing is too much. Nothing is to much for lust, for pleasure, for back, for belly, building, for cards and dice, for whores and harlots, for rioting and revelling, for taverns and brothel-*

houſes. Hundreds and thouſands are little enough, and too little for their expences this way. It is lamentable to conſider what maſſes of money are ſpent and beſtowed upon theſe things. But alaſs, alaſs, how heavy an account are they to make in the day of the Lord, which ſo ſpend their Lands, Livings and revenues! I quake to think what ſhall become of them at laſt. It were well for them, if they might be in no worſe caſe than a Crocodile or a Cur-dog.

Theol. It is moſt certain that you ſay: and we all have great cauſe to lament it, and to take up the old complaint of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, ſaying, *From the leaſt of them, even unto the greateſt of them, every one is given unto covetouſneſs: and from the Prophet even unto the Preiſts, they all deal falſly.* And another Prophet ſaith, *They build up* Zion *with blood, and* Jeruſalem *with iniquity.* Mic. 3. 10. *The heads thereof judge for rewards, and the Preiſts thereof teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof propheſie for money: yet will they lean upon the Lord, and ſay, Is not the Lord amongſt us? No evil can come unto us.* But theſe holy Prophets and men of God do fully deſcribe unto us the ſtate of our time; wherein, though all be corrupted; yet we bear our ſelves ſtoutly upon God, we preſume of his favour, becauſe of our outward profeſſion, and ſay our hearts. No evil can come unto us.

Aſun. *You ſay very true, Sir, The world was never ſo ſet upon covetouſneſs, and men were never ſo greedily given to the world, as now adaies. And yet (in truth) there is no cauſe why men ſhould be ſo ſharp ſet upon this world. For this world is but vanity: and all is but pelf and traſh. Fie on this muck.*

Phil. *Many ſuch men as you are, can skill to give good words, and ſay, Fie on this world, all is but vanity; and yet for all that, in your dayly practiſe, you are nevertheleſs ſet upon the world, nor never the more ſeek after God. You hear the Word of God no whit the more, you read no whit the more, you pray never the more, which evidently ſheweth, That all your fair ſpeeches and proteſtations are nought elſe but hypocryſie and leazing. Your heart is not with God, for*

all

all this. All is but words, there is no ſuch feeling in the heart, and therefore I may juſtly ſay to you, as God himſelf ſaid to his people, This people have ſaid well, all that they have ſaid. Deut. 5. 29. *Oh, that there were an heart in them to fear me, and keep my Commandements!*

Theol. His words indeed are good, if his heart were according. For all things conſidered, there is no cauſe why men ſhould be ſo given to this world, for they muſt leave it, when they have done all that they can. As we ſay, To day a man, to morrow none. And as the Apoſtle ſaith, 1. Tim. 6. *We brought nothing into this world; and it is certain we ſhall carry nothing out.* We muſt all die, we know not how ſoon: why therefore ſhould men ſet their hearts upon ſuch incertainties, and deceivable things, for all things in this world are more light than a feather, more brittle than glaſſe, more fleeting than a ſhadow, more vaniſhing then ſmoak, more unconſtant than the Wind: *Doubtleſs*, ſaith the Prophet *David*, *man walketh in a ſhadow, and diſquieteth himſelf in vain, he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who ſhall gather them. Pſal.* 39. 6. I wonder therefore that theſe Moles and muck worms of this earth ſhould ſo minde theſe ſhadowiſh things, and ſo dote on them as they do. If they were not altogether hardned and blinded by the Devil, they would not be ſo nearly knit to the clod, and the penny, as they are; thinking and always imagining, that there is no happineſs but in thoſe things which are but dung and droſs: and at laſt they will give us the ſlip, when we think our ſelves moſt ſure of them.

The wiſe King, who had the greateſt experience of thoſe things that ever man had, for he enjoyed whatſoever this world could afford, upward and downward, backward and forward, yet could he find nothing in them but Vanity and vexation of Spirit. Moreover, he flatly avoucheth, That all theſe things, riches, wealth, honour, pleaſures and treaſures, will moſt notably deceive us in the end, give us the ſlip,

and be gone. For he compareth riches and all the glory of the world to an Eagle or Hawke, which a man holdeth upon his fiſt, ſtroketh her, maketh much of her, taketh great delight and pleaſure in her, and ſaith, he will not take tenn pounds for her; yet all on the ſudden ſhe taketh her flight, and flyeth up into the air, and he never ſeeth her more, nor ſhe him. The words of the Holy Ghoſt are theſe, *wilt thou cauſe thine eyes to fly after them*, (meaning riches)? *Thou mayſt; but they will not be found. For they will make themſelves wings like to the Eagle, which flieth up to Heaven*, From thence we may learn, that though we ſet our heart never ſo much on any thing here below, yet at the laſt it ſhall be taken from us, or we from it. Therefore all worldly men do but weave the ſpiders web, and may fitly be compared to the ſilly ſpider, who toyleth her ſelf, and laboureth all the week long to finiſh up her web, that ſhe might lodge her ſelf in it, as in her own houſe, and freehold. But alaſs! at the weeks end, a Maid, in a moment, with one bruſh of the broom, diſpoſſeſſeth her of her inheritance? which ſhe had purchaſed with great labour and much ado, Even ſo, when the men of this world have with much care and travel, purchaſed great Lands and Revenues, and gathered all that that they can; yet on the ſudden, death (with) one ſtroke of his direful dart) will make them give up the Ghoſt, and then where are they? It was prettily therefore ſaid of a man in the light of nature (Seneca) *No man hath ever lived ſo happily in this life, but in his life-time many things have befallen him, for the which he hath wiſhed rather to die than to live.* And aſſuredly I think there was never any man lived any one day upon the face of the earth, but ſome greif or other either did, or juſtly might invade his mind ere night; either in the temptation of the World, the fleſh, or the Devil; or in regard of Soul, Body, Goods or Name; in regard of Wife, Children, Friends or Neighbours: in regard of Dangers to Prince, State, Church or Common-Wealth; in regard of Caſualties, and loſſe by Water,

Water, by Fire, by Sea or Land, What a life therefore is this, that hath not one good day in it? who wouldde ſire to dwell long in it? For it lieth open every day to manifold Miſeries, Dangers, Loſſes, Caſualties, Reproaches, Shame, Infamy, Poverty, Sickneſs, Diſeaſes, Cholicks, Agues, Tooth-ache, Head-ache, Back-ache, Bone-ache, and a thouſand Calamities.

Phil. You have very well deſcribed unto us, the vanity of this life, and that no day is free from one ſorrow or other, one grief or other; the which thing our Lord Jeſus ratifieth in the reaſon which he bringeth why men ſhould not diſtruſtfully care for to morrow. For, ſaith he, ſufficient to the day is the evil thereof; Or, as ſome read it, The day hath enough with his own grief. Wherein he doth plainly ſhew that every day hath his ſorrow, his evil, his grief, and his 'thwart. But, I pray you, proceed further in this point.

Theol. This I ſay further; That when men have ſwinked and ſweat, carked and cared, moiled and turmoiled, drudged and droiled by night and by day, by Sea and by land, with much care and ſorrow, much labour and grief, to rake together the things of this life; yet at laſt all will away again, and we muſt end where we began. For as *Job* ſaid, *Naked we came into the world, and naked we muſt go out. Job* 1. For even as a Wind-mill beateth it ſelf, maketh a great noyſe, whiſtleth and whisketh about, from day to day, all the year long, yet at the years end ſtandeth ſtill where it began, being not moved one foot backward or forward: ſo when men have bluſtered and blown all that they can, and have even run themſelves out of breath, to ſcrape up the commodities of the earth, yet at laſt they muſt (in ſpight of their beards) end where they begun; end with nothing, as they begun with nothing; end with a winding ſheet, as they begun with ſwadling clouts. For what is become of the greateſt Monarches, Kings, Princes, Potentates and Magnificoes that ever the World had? where is *Cyrus*, *Darius*, *Xerxes*, *Alexander*, *Cæſar*, *Pompey*, *Scipio* and *Hannibal*? where are the Valiant *Henries*, and Noble *Edwards* of

England? Are they not all gone down to the houſe of oblivion? Are they not all returned to their duſt, and their thoughts periſh? Though they were as Gods, yet have they dyed as men, and are fallen like others. Who now careth for them? who talketh of them? who ſeareth them? who regardeth them? do not beggers tread upon them? Yet while they lived, they were the Lords of the world; they were as terrible as Lyons, fearful to all men, full of Pomp and Glory, Dignity and Majeſty. They plowed up all things, they bear all before them, and who but they? But now they have given up the Ghoſt, *Job* 30. 23. *and are* (as *Job* ſaith) *gone down to the Houſe appointed for all the living.* Their pomp is deſcended with them, and all their glory is buryed in the aſhes. They are now covered under a clod, caſt out into a Vault, made companions to toads, and the worms do eat them; and what is become of their ſouls, is moſt of all to be feared.

Thus we ſee how all fleſh doth but make a Vain ſhew for a while upon this Theatre of miſery, fetching a compaſs about, and is preſently gone. For, as the Poet ſaith, *Serius aut citius ſedem properamus ad unam*, firſt or laſt we muſt all to the grave.

Aſun. *You have made a very good ſpeech, it doth me good to hear it. I wonder all theſe things conſidered, that men ſhould be ſo wholly given up to this world, as they are. I think the Devil hath bewitched them; for they ſhall carry nothing with them when they die, but their good deeds and their ill,*

Theol. The drudges and ſnudges of this world, may very fitly be compared to a Kings Sumpter-horſe, which goeth laden all the day long with as much Gold and Treaſure as he can bear, but at night his treaſure is taken from him; & he is turned into a ſorry dirty ſtable, and hath nothing left him but his galled back: Even ſo the rich Cormorants and Caterpillars of the earth, which here have treaſured and hoorded up great heaps of gold and ſilver, (with the which they travel loaden thorow this World) ſhall in the end be ſtript out of all, let down into their grave, and have nothing left them,

them, but their galled conſciences, with the which they ſhall be tumbled down into the dungeon of eternal darkneſs.

Phil. *Wherein doth the ſting and ſtrength of this world eſpecially conſiſt?*

Theol. Even as the great ſtrength of *Samſon* lay in his hair, ſo the great ſtrength of the world lyeth in her two breaſts, the one of pleaſure, the other of profit. For ſhe like a notable Strumpet, by laying out of theſe her breaſts, doth bewitch the Sons of men, and allureth thouſands to her luſt. For if ſhe cannot win them with the one breaſt, yet ſhe gaineth them with the other; if not with pleaſure, then with profit; if not with profit, then with pleaſure: He is an odd man of a thouſand that ſucketh not of the one breaſt or the other. But ſure it is, which ſoever he ſucketh, he ſhall be poyſoned; for ſhe giveth none other milk but rank poyſon. The world therefore is like an alluring *Jael*, (*Judg.*4.21.) which ſitteth at her door to entice us to come in, and eat of the milk of her pleaſures; but when ſhe hath once got us in, ſhe is ready (even while we are eating) with her hammer and her nail to pierce thorow our brains.

Phil. *I ſee plainly, this world is a very ſtrumpet, a ſtrong bait, and a ſnaring net, wherein thouſands are taken. It is very birdlime, which doth ſo belime our affections, that they cannot aſcend upward. It is like the weights of a clock, hang'd upon our ſoul, which draw them down to the earth; it naileth us faſt down to the ground: it mortereth us into clay: it maketh us abominable unto God. For I remember God made a law,* Lev.11. *That whoſoever goeth with his breaſt upon the ground, ſhould be abominable unto us. How much more theſe carnal worldlings, which are faſt ſodered to the earth!*

Theol. The Apoſtle Saint *James*, ſeeing into the deep wickedneſs of this World, and knowing right-well how odious it maketh us in the ſight of God, cryeth out againſt it, terming it Adultery, and all worldlings, adulterers, becauſe they forſake Chriſt their true Husband, and whoriſhly give their hearts to this World.

O ye Adulterers, and adultereſſes, (Jam.4.) ſaith he, *know ye not that the amity of this world is the enmity of God? Whoſoever therefore will be made a friend to this world, makes himſelf the enemy of God.* And who dares ſtand forth and ſay, I will be the enemy of God? Who therefore dares be a worldling? for every worldling is the enemy of God: what then will become of you, O ye wicked worldlings?

Phil. *It appeareth then plainly by the Scriptures that the exceſſive love of this world, and unſatiable deſire of having, is a moſt dangerous thing, and men do they know not what in ſeeking ſo greedily after it.*

Theol. The Heathen man will riſe up in judgement againſt us; for he ſaith, *(Soph.) Unſatiableneſs is the fouleſt evil amongſt mortal men.* But many of our Sea-gulfs and Whirl-pools make no conſcience of it. They think it is no ſin, they devour and ſwallow up all, and yet are never ſatisfied: they will have all, and more than all, and the Devil and all. The whole World cannot ſatisfie their mind, but God muſt create new worlds to content them. Theſe men are ſick of the golden dropſie; the more they have, the more they deſire. The love of money increaſeth, as money it ſelf increaſeth. But the Scripture ſaith, *(Eccleſ. 5.10.) He that loveth ſilver ſhall not be ſatisfied with ſilver.* Oh therefore that we would ſtrive earneſtly to get out of this gulf of hell, *and tread the Moon* (that is all worldly things) *under our feet, (Apoc. 12. 1.)* as it is ſpoken of the Church: and that we would ſet our affections on the things that are above, and not on the things that are beneath: that we would flie an high pitch, and ſoar aloft as the Eagles, looking down at this world, and all things in it, as at our feet; contemning it, and treading the very glory of it under our feet, that it may never have more power over us.

Phil. *O happy, and twice happy are they that can do ſo! and I beſeech the Almighty God to give us this holy Spirit, whereby we may be carryed above this world, into the*

the Mountains of Spices. For, how happy a thing is it to have our converſation in Heaven! that is to have an inward converſation with God, by much prayer, reading, meditation, and heavenly affections, This indeed is to climbe up above the world, and to converſe in the chambers of peace. O therefore that we would ſeriouſly and throughly conceive and conſider of this world as it is! that we would well weigh the vanity of it, and the excellency of that which is to come; that ſo we might loath the one, and love the other; deſpiſe the one, and imbrace the other; love God more than ever we did, and this world leſs! For what is this world but vanitie of vanities?

Antil. *You do ſo exceedingly abaſe that which ſome make their God. You ſpeak contemtuouſly, of that which moſt men have in greateſt price and admiration. You diſgrace that which multitudes would Grace. You make light of that which numbers make greateſt account of. Let us therefore hear your Reaſons. Shew us more fully what it is; deſcribe it unto us.*

Theol. The world is a ſea of glaſs, a pageant of fond delights, a Theatre of vanity, a Labyrinth of errour, a Gulf of grief, a Stye of filthineſs, a Vale of miſery, a ſpectacle of woe, a river of tears, a Stage of deceit, a Cage full of Owls, a den of Scorpions, a wilderneſs of Wolves, a Cabin of Bears, a whirl-winde of paſſions, a feigned Comedy, a delectable phrenſie, where is falſe delight, aſſured grief, certain ſorrow, uncertain pleaſure, laſting wo, fickle worth, long heavineſs, ſhort joy.

Phil. *Now you have indeed deſcribed it to the full, and laid it out (as it were) in Orient colours. And a man would think he were bewitched or ſtark mad, which hereafter ſhould ſet his mind on it. But yet I am deſirous to hear a little more of that which I asked you before: wherein the ſtrength and poyſon of the world doth eſpecially conſiſt?*

Theol. In this lyeth a great ſtrength of the world, that it draweth down the ſtars of heaven, and maketh them fall to the earth, as it is ſaid of the Dragons tail;

tail; which is ambition, covetouſneſs, and the love of his world. (*Rev.* 12.) For we may wonder and lament, to ſee how the love of theſe things hath wounded and overborn many excellent Servants of God, both Preachers and Profeſſors of the Goſpel: which thing doth plainly argue the ſtrength of it, for it is the ſtrongeſt, and the very laſt Engine that Satan uſeth to impugne us withal, when none other will prevail: For when no temptation could faſten upon Chriſt, he bringeth forth this laſt weapon, which never faileth, *All theſe things will I give thee*; (*Mat.* 4.) ſhewing him the glory of the whole world. So then, he (having experience in this, that it never faileth) thought to have overcome Chriſt himſelf with it. Here therefore lyeth the very ſting and ſtrength of the World and the Devil: for whom hath he not taken with, *All theſe things, will I give thee?* Whom hath he not wounded? Whom hath he not deceived? Whom hath he not overthrown? With this he enticed *Balaam*: with this he beguiled *Achan?* with this he overthrew *Judas*: with this he bewitched *Demas*: with this in theſe our days he deceiveth many of excellent gifts. For aſſuredly he is a *Phœnix* amongſt men, which is not overcome with this. He is a wonderment of the World that is not moved with money.

Phil. *I am now fully ſatisfyed for this matter. But one thing cometh often into my mind; to wit, that theſe miſerable worldlings can have no ſound comfort in their pleaſures and profits, becauſe they have no comfort in God, nor peace in their own Conſciences.*

Theol. You ſay very true. It is impoſſible that men loving this world, ſhould have any ſound comfort in God: For no man can ſerve two Maſters, both God and riches: Their caſe therefore is very dangerous and fearful, though they never ſee it nor feel it; as I will ſhew you by a plain example: Put caſe one of theſe great rich worldlings ſhould be cloathed in Velvet, and cloath of Gold, in moſt ſtately manner, and alſo ſhould be ſet at his Table, ſur-

furniſhed with all the dainties of the world, ſhould be attended and waited upon by many in moſt lordly and pompous mannner, ſhould ſit in his goodly dining chamber, all glittering like Gold; ſhould have his firſt, ſecond, and third ſervice ſerved in with minſtrels and inſtruments of Muſick in moſt Royal ſort, he ſitting in his chair like a King in his Throne; yet for all this, if a dagger ſhould be held to his heart all this while, ready to ſtab him, what pleaſure, what joy, what comfort could he have in all the reſt? Even ſo whatſoever pomp and pleaſures wicked worldlings have here below, yet their guilty and helliſh Conſcience is as it were a dagger held alwaies hard to their heart, ſo as they can have no ſound comfort in any thing. Or let me give it you thus: Put caſe a man hath committed high treaſon, and were therefore apprehended, arraigned and condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered; what then can comfort a man in this caſe? can mirth, can muſick, can gold, can ſilver, can livings, can Lands? No, no, none of all theſe can help him, or give him any comfort: For the continual thoughts of death do ſo gripe him at the heart, that none of all theſe can do him any good, or any whit mitigate his grief. What then is the thing that can comfort him in this caſe? Only a pardon ſealed with the Kings broad Seal, and ſubſcribed with his own hand. For as ſoon as he hath got this, his heavy heart reviveth, and leapeth for joy. This then aſſuredly is the very caſe of all profane Atheiſts and Worldlings, who are not aſſured of the King of Heaven his pardon for their ſin: and then, what joy can they have either in their meat, drink, goods, cattel, wives, children, lands, revenues, or any thing whatſoever? For the dreadful thoughts of Hell do oftentimes croſs them inwardly, and quite damp and daſh all their mirth, their own Conſciences will not be ſtilled, but in moſt terrible manner riſe up, and give evidence againſt them, telling them flatly they ſhall be damned, how merry and jocund ſoever they ſeem to be in this world, ſetting a good face on

the

the matter. For ſure it is, that inwardly they have many a cold pull, and many heart-gripes. And all their mirth and jolity is but a giggling from the teeth outward, they can have no ſound comfort within. And therefore the wiſe King ſaith, *Even in laughter the heart is ſorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heavineſs.* Likewiſe ſaith the holy man *Job*, *Terrours of Conſcience come upon the wicked man like waters: in the night a whirl-wind carrieth him away ſecretly.* *Eliphas* the *Temanite* avoucheth the ſame point, ſaying, *The wicked man is continually as one that travelleth with child: a ſound of fear is in his ears*, &c. Thus then we ſee, that howſoever many carnal Atheiſts, and ungodly perſons ſeem outwardly to float aloft in all mirth and jollity, bearing it out (as we ſay) at the breaſt: yet inwardly are they pinched with terrours, and moſt horrible convulſions of Conſcience.

Antil. *You have ſpoken many things very ſharply againſt covetouſneſs; but in my mind, ſo long as a man covets nothing but his own, he cannot be ſaid to be covetous.*

Theol. Yes that he may. For not only is he coveverous, which greedily deſireth other mens goods; but even he alſo which over-niggardly and pinchingly holdeth faſt his own, and is ſuch a miſer, that he will part with nothing. We ſee the world is full of ſuch pinch-pennies, that will let nothing go, except it be wrung from them perforce, as a key out of *Hercule*'s hand.

The gripple muck-rakers had as leeve part with their blood, as their goods. They will pinch their own backs and bellies, to get their God into their cheſts, and when they have once got him there, will they eaſily part with him, trow ye? No, no: a man will part with his God for no man's pleaſure. He will eat peaſe-bread, and drink ſmall drink, rather than he will diminiſh his God. Therefore the Scripture ſaith, *Eat not the meat of him that hath an evil eye, and deſire not his dainty diſhes. For as he grudgeth his own Soul, ſo will he ſay unto thee, Eat and Drink, when his heart is not with thee. Thou ſhalt vomit thy morſels*

which

which thou hast eaten, and lose thy pleasant speeches. (*Prov.* 23. 6.) The old saying is, The Covetous man wanteth as well that which he hath, as that which he hath not, because he hath no use of that which he hath. So then you see, there is a great strength of covetousness in the niggardly keeping of our own.

Antil. *Yet for all this, men must follow their worldly business, and lay up to live. For it is an hard world, and goods are not easie to come by. Therefore men must ply their business, or else they may go beg and starve.*

Theol. I deny not but that you may follow the works of your calling diligently, so it be in the fear of God, and with a good conscience, as I told you before: but this greediness, and grippleness God doth condemn, and also this excessive love of money.

Antil. *Believe me, I know no body that hates it; I cannot see but that all men love gold and silver.*

Theol. It is one thing to use these things, and another thing to love them, and set our hearts upon them. For the Scripture saith, *If riches encrease, set your hearts upon them.* Saint *John* also saith, *Love not this world, nor the things that are in this world.* (1 *Joh.* 2.) He saith not, *use not this world*; but, *Love not this world*: for use it we may; love it we may not. Therefore the Apostle saith, that, *They which use this world, should be as though they used it not.* Where he alloweth a sober and moderate use of the things of this life in the fear of God. We must use this world for necessities sake, as we use meat and drink; taking no more of this world than needs must for fear of surfeiting. The Holy Ghost saith, *Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with things present.* (*Heb.* 13. 5.) Happy is that man therefore that is well content with his present estate whatsoever, and carrieth himself moderately and comfortably therein. For the SPIRIT saith, *There is no profit to a man under the Sun, but that he eat, drink, and delight his soul with the profit of his labours. I saw also this, that this is the hand of God.* (*Eccles.* 2. 24.) In which words, the prudent King saith thus much in effect: That this

is

is all the good we can attain unto in this world, even to take a ſober and comfortable uſe of the things of this life which God beſtoweth upon us. And further he avoucheth, *That thus to uſe them aright, and with a ſound comfort, is a very rare gift of God.* (*Eccleſ.* 5. 18, 19.) For, as one [Greg. Nazia.] ſaith, *He is a wiſe man, that is not grieved for the things which he hath not; but doth rejoyce in the things which he hath, uſing them to God's glory and his own comfort.* So then I conclude this point, and return to you an anſwer, thus: That we may in ſober and Godly manner, uſe Gold, Silver, and the things of this life: but at no hand to overlove them, or give our hearts unto them.

Antil. *Well; yet for all this I cannot ſee but that theſe Preachers and Profeſſors, theſe learned men and preciſe fellows, are even as eager of the world, and as covetous as any other.*

Theol. Now you ſhew your venemous ſpirit againſt better men than your ſelf. And I have a four-fold anſwer for you. Firſt, I anſwer, that although godly men may be ſomewhat overtaken this way, and over-ſpirit a little, yet they break not out ſo groſly as others. Secondly, if God leave them ſometimes to be overcome of the world, yet he, in his great wiſdom and mercy, turneth it to their good. For thereby he firſt humbleth them, and afterwards raiſeth them up again. And ſo *all things work together for good to thoſe that love God.* (*Rom.* 8.) Thirdly, I anſwer, we muſt live by Rules, and not by Examples. For even the beſt of God's people have had their wants and weakneſſes. Therefore we may not frame rules to live by out of the infirmities of the moſt excellent Servants of God. Wicked therefore and impious is their allegation, who alledge *David*'s Adultery. *Lot*'s drunkenneſs, *Peter*'s fall, *Abraham*'s ſlips, *Solomons* weakneſs, *&c.* for a ſhelter, and defence of themſelves in like ſins. Laſtly, I anſwer, that you greatly wound your ſelf in your own ſpeech; ſo far off are you from mending your market any whit thereby. For if Preachers and other Godly men (after many prayers,

tears,

tears, and much means uſed) cannot eſcape ſcot-free, but ſometimes are wounded, and almoſt overthrown by the world and the Devil; what then ſhall become of you, which uſe no means at all, nor any gain-ſtriving, but willingly give place to the Devil. If the Devil did over-maſter *David*, *Lot*, *Sampſon*, *Solomon*, and other ſuch excellent Worthies; alas! what ſhall become of meer Worldlings and Atheiſts? If the moſt valiant men, and chief Captains in a battle go down, what ſhall become of the fain-hearted Souldiers? And as St. *Peter* ſaith, *if the righteous ſcarce be ſaved, where ſhall the wicked and ungodly appear?* (1 *Pet.* 4. 18.) So then I take you at the rebound, and return your own weapon upon your ſelf; that ſith godly men cannot eſcape through this world without blows; what ſhall become of them that know not what godlineſs meaneth?

Antil. *Yet I ſay once again that men muſt live, men muſt lay up for this world: we cannot live by the Scripture, and as for that which you call covetouſneſs, it is but good Husbandry.*

Theol. I thought we ſhould have it at laſt. Now you have paid it home: you are come to the old byas, and as a hare to her old form, and her old covert. For this is the very covert and thicket of the world wherein they would hide covetouſneſs: but I will do what I can to hunt you out of it by the Scriptures.

Firſt *Solomon* ſaith, *He that ſpareth more than is right, ſhall ſurely come to poverty.* (*Prov.* 11. 24.) So then you ſee, that covetouſneſs bringeth forth poverty. Thus therefore I reaſon: That which bringeth poverty is no good Husbandry: but covetouſneſs and too much ſparing bringeth poverty; therefore it is no good husbandry. The ſame *Solomon* ſaith, *He that is given to gain, troubleth his own houſe.* That is, the covetous man is an occaſion of many evils in his eſtate and Family. From Scripture I do thus reaſon: That which troubleth a mans houſe is no good Huſbandry; but covetouſneſs troubleth a mans houſe; therefore it is no good husbandry. Laſt of all the old

Pro-

Proverb ſaith, *Covetousneſs bringeth nothing home*: and therefore it is no good husbandry. For oftentimes we ſee, that men for Covetouſneſs of more, loſe that which otherwiſe they might have had.. One of the wiſe Heathen ſaith, *Evil gain is a bad loſs. Heſiodus* But the Covetous man doth ſeek after wicked gain, and therefore ſeeketh loſs; and conſequently is no good Husband. Another ſaith, *unjuſt g in bringeth forth loſs and miſery.* (*Phocilides.*) And therefore its farre enough from Vertue, and all good Husbandry. Thus then I hope you are ſo hunted both by God and men, that this covert cannot hide you. And therefore you muſt out of it, and ſeek ſome other ſhelter: for this will not ſerve your turn.

Phil. *Now I muſt needs ſay you have fully ſtopt his mouth, and throughly ferreted him out of his deep burrow. And it is moſt certain that you ſay, that the wiſe-Heathen hath condemned covetouſneſſe and all unjuſt gains; which we both practiſe and defend: and therefore ſhall they riſe up in judgment againſt us. But now let us leave this caviller, and proceed in our matters. There is one thing yet remaining, wherein I deſire to be ſatisfied.*

Theol. What is that?

Phil. *I would gladly know which be the ſpecial remedies againſt covitouſneſs.*

Theol. There be two ſpecial remedies againſt covetouſneſs: to wit, contentation, and the mediation of Gods Providence.

Phil. *Let us hear ſomewhat of contentation out of the Scriptures.*

Theol. The Apoſtle ſaith, *having food and raiment, we muſt therewith be content* 1 *Tim.* 6. 8. *For we brought nothing into this world: and it is certain we ſhall carry nothing out, Heb.* 13.5. The Spirit alſo ſaith, *Let your converſation be without covetouſneſs, and be content with your preſent State.* Again, the Apoſtle ſaith, *He had learned in whatſoever ſtate he was, therewith to be content. Phil.* 4.11. Note, that he ſaith, he had learned; For he had it not of himſelf. For contentation is the ſingular gift of God: as it is written,

The

The righteous eateth to the contentation of his Soul: but the belly of the wicked ſhall want, Prov. 13. 25. An ancient Father ſaith, (*Cyril. in Joan.* 12.) *We ought to accuſtome our ſelves to live of a little, and to be content, that we may do no wicked or filthy things for lucres ſake.* Another ſaith, (Chryſ. hom. 51.) *He is not poor that hath nothing, but he that deſireth much. Neither is he rich that hath much, but he that wanteth nothing: for contentation never wanteth. There is no greif in lacking but where there is immoderate deſire of having. If we will live after Nature, we ſhall never be poor: if after our own appetite, we ſhall never be rich.* Well therefore ſaid the Poet, (Eurip.) *Wax not rich unjuſtly, but juſtly: Be content with thine own things, abſtain from other mens.* Thus then we ſee, that both God himſelf (the fountain of all wiſedom) and men alſo, both in the ſtate of nature and grace, do all joyntly adviſe us to ſtrive for contentation; and then we ſhall have a ſoveraign remedy againſt Covetouſneſs.

Phil. *Let us hear ſomewhat of the ſecond remedy againſt Covetouſneſs.*

Theol. An earneſt thinking upon the Providence of God is a preſent remedy againſt the moſt fooliſh and pining carefulneſs of men for this life. For if we would ſeriouſly weigh, and deeply conſider the provident care that God hath had for his children in all ages, touching food and rayment, and how ſtrangely he hath provided for them; it might ſuffice to correct this evil in us, and miniſter unto us a noteable preſervative, againſt Covetouſneſs:

We read how wonderfully the Lord did provide for his Prophet *Eliſah* in the time of the great dearth and drought that was in *Iſrael.* Did not the Lord command the Ravens to feed him by the River *Cherith*, 1 *Kings* 17. Did not the Ravens bring him bread and fleſh in the morning, and bread and fleſh in the evening, and he drank of the River?

What ſhould I ſpeak, how miraculouſly God provided for *Hagar* and her Infant, *Gen.* 21. 19. when they were both caſt out of *Abrahams* houſe, and brought

brought to great extremity; even both of them ready for to give up the Ghoſt for want of food.

Did not God help at a pinch, as his manner hath alwaies been? *Exod.* 15. 5. Did he not ſend his Angel unto them, and both comfort them, and provide for them? What ſhould I ſpeak how ſtrangely God provided for his Church in the Wilderneſs? *Exod.* 17. 6. Did he not feed them with *Manna* from Heaven, and gave them Water to drink out of a Rock, *Pſal.* 78. hath not our Heavenly Father made many royal and large promiſes, that he will provide neceſſaries for his children? Shall we not think that he will be as good as his word? doth he not ſay, *The Lyons lack and ſuffer hunger, but they tht ask him ſhall want nothing that is good?* *Pſal.* 34. 10. Doth he not ſay, *Fear him all ye his Saints, for nothing is wanting to them that fear him?* *Pſal.* 84. 11. Doth he not ſay, *No good thing ſhall be with-held from them that walk uprightly?* *Mat.* 6. 33. Doth he not ſay, *Our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of theſe things, and that all theſe things ſhall be caſt upon us, if we earneſtly ſeek his Kingdom?* Did he not bid us, *Caſt all your care upon him, for he careth for us?* 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. Doth he not bid us, *Take no thought what we ſhall eat, or what we ſhall drink, or wherewith we ſhall be cloathed?* *Luk.* 12. Meaning therebyno diſtracting or diſtruſtfull thoughts. Doth he not ſay, *He will not leave us, nor forſake us?* *Heb.* 13. 5. Doth he not ſay, *The Lord is at hand, in nothing be carefull?* *Phil.* 4. 5. Are not theſe large promiſes ſufficient to ſtay up our faith in Gods providence? Shall we think God jeſteth with us? Shall we think he meaneth no ſuch matter? Shall we imagine he will not keep touch? Oh it were blaſphemy once to think it. For God is true, and all men lyars: He is faithfull that hath promiſed. His word is more than the faith of a Prince; more than ten thouſand Obligations. Why doe we not reſt upon it why go we any further? Why do we not take his VVord? why do we not depend wholly upon him? why are we ſtill covetous? why are we ſtill diſtruſtful,

ful? why do we dissemble and deceive? Oh we of little faith! Our Lord Jesus knowing right well the distrustfulness of our nature, and the deep root it hath in us is not only content to make these great and royal promises unto us, which were enough, but also strengthneth and backeth us with many strong Reasons to support our weakness in this behalf. He therefore bringeth us back to a due consideration of things. *Consider* (saith he) *the Ravens: consider the fowls of the Heavens: for they neither sow nor reap, nor carry into barns, and yet God feedeth them; they want nothing. Consider the Lillies, how they grow they neither labour nor spin; yet* Solomon *in all his royalty was not clothed like one of these, Luk.* 12. Oh therefore that we would consider these *Considers*! Oh that we would consider, that our life is more worth than meat, and our bodies then rayment! Oh that we would consider, that with all our carking and caring we can do no good at all no not so much as add one cubit to our stature! Truly, truly, if we would deeply ponder these Reasons, of our Saviour, and apply them to our selves: they might serve for a bulwark and sure defence against covetousness. If men would consider how that great King of Heaven, *who hath his way in the whirl-wind and the Clouds are the dust of his feet, Nah.* 1. 3. careth for the little VVren and silly Sparrow, how he looketh to them, how he tendereth them, how he provideth for them every day, both breakfast, dinner, and supper, it might serve to correct our distrustfulness. For who ever saw these, or any other fowl, starve for hunger? so good a Father, and so good a Nurse have they. And are not we much better than they? Hath not God more care of us, than of them: Yes verily, a thousand times. For he loveth them but for our sakes: how much more then doth he love our selves? Therefore I say again and again, if we would consider these things, and lay them to heart, they would nip covetousness on the head, and drive it quite out of our hearts. Let us consider therefore, that God Provided for man before man was: then how much more will he provide for man now that he is? Is he our Father and will

he

he not provide for us? Is he our King, and will not he regard us? Is he our Shephard, and will he not look after us? Hath he provided Heaven for us, and will he not give us earth? Hath he given his Son Chriſt, and ſhall he not with him give us all things? Doth he providefor his enemies, and will he not provide for his freinds; Doth he provide for whoremongers, and will he neglect his choſen, Doth he ſend his rain, and cauſe the Sun to ſhine upon the unjuſt, and ſhall he not upon the Juſt? Doth he provide for them which are not of the family, and will he not provide for his own family? VVill a man feed his hoggs and not care for his ſervants? Or will he care for his ſervants, and not regard his own Children? Oh then let us conſider theſe Reaſons: let us remember, that our Heavenly Father hath a great care for the preſervation of his creatures, as once he had for their creation. Let us therefere remember, that he that giveth the day, will provide for us the things of the day. Let us remember, that God alway giveth for ſuſtentation, though not for ſatiety, *Prov.* 10. 38. Let us remember, that *God will not famiſh the ſouls of the righteous.* Let us remember how God never faileth his. For whoever truſteth in the Lord, and was confounded?

Phil. *What then is the cauſe that many do want theſe outward ſtreams?*

Theol. The cauſe is in themſelves, becauſe they want faith. For if we had faith, we could want nothing. *For Faith feareth no Famine,* as ſaith an ancient Father *(Hieron. ad Heliodorum.)* Another ſaith, *Cypr. in oratione Dominica) Foraſmuch as all things are Gods, he that hath God can want nothing, if himſelf be not wanting unto God.* Therefore to have God is to have all things; for if we have him, our freind, we have enough, we need go no further. For he will make men our freinds: yea, he will make Angels, and all Creatures to be ſerviceable unto us, and to do contiual homage unto us. Therefore let us make God our freind, and then have we done all at once, that

may

may concern our good, both for this life and a better. But if he ſtand not our friend, if we have not him on our ſide, if he back us not, then all other things whatſoever can do us no good, all is not worth a button: For, (Auguſt) *Quid prodeſt ſi omnia habes, cum tamen qui omnia dedit non habeas?* What is a man the better, though he have all things, and be without him which is the author of all things?

Phil *Herein you ſpeak very truly, no doubt. For we ſee many have great plenty of outward things, but becauſe they have not God, they can have nor true comfort in them or bleſſing with them.*

Theol. True indeed: For, *Man liveth not by bread only,* (ſaith our Lord Jeſus) *but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* Matth. 4. And again he ſaith, *Though a man have abundance, yet his life conſiſteth not in the things that he hath.* Luk. 12. For without Gods bleſſing, there can be no ſound comfort in any thing. We ſee by daily experience how the Lord curſeth the wicked, though they have abundance. For ſome having abundance, yet are viſited with continual ſickneſſes. Some having abundance, pine away with conſumptions. Others having abundance, dye of ſurfeiting. Others are ſnatched away by untimely death, in the midſt of all their jollity. Others are viſited with great loſs both by Sea and by Land. Others are vexed with curſt VVives, and diſobedient Children. Some again commit murthers and treaſons, and ſo loſe all at once. Others are waſted and conſumed by the ſecret curſe of God, no man knoweth how. Some having great riches, are given over to the murtherers, ſome to the theif, ſome to the poyſoner. Therefore the wiſe King ſaith, *There is a ſore evil, which I have ſeen under the Sun, namely riches, kept for the owners thereof to their hurt,* Eccleſ. 5. 13.

Zophar alſo the *Naamathite*, ſaith; (*Job* 20. 22, 23.) *When the wicked ſhall have ſufficient and enough, he ſhall be brought into ſtraits. The hand of every troubleſome man ſhall be upon him. When he ſhall fill his belly, God will ſend upon him his fierce wrath, which he ſhall rain upon him in ſtead of his meat.*

Thus then it is clear, that mans life and good eſtate dependeth not upon the abundance of outward things, but only upon the bleſſing and providence of God. For, *his bleſſing onely maketh rich, and it doth bring no ſorrow with it,* (*Prov.* 10. 21.) For, *Better is a little to the juſt, than great abundance to many of the wicked,* (Pſal. 37.16. *Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, than great treaſure, and trouble therewith,* (Prov. 15. 16.) *Better is a little with righteouſneſs, than great revenues without equity,* (Prov. 16.8)

Thus then I conclude this point. Man liveth not by bread, but by a bleſſing on bread; not by outward means, but by a bleſſing upon means. For how can bread being a dead thing, and having no life in it ſelf, give life to others?

Phil. *I do not well underſtand the meaning of theſe words. By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

Theol. Thereby is meant the decree, ordinance and providence of God, which upholdeth all things, even the whole order of Nature.

For the Scripture ſaith, (*Pſal.* 33. 9.) *He ſpake, and it was done; he commanded, and they were created.* In which words we plainly ſee, that God doth but ſpeak, and it is done; he doth command, and all creatures are preſerved. For God doth all things with a word. He created all things with his word, he preſerveth all things with his word, he ſpeaketh, and it is done. His words are words of power and authority. Whatſoever he ſaith, whatſoever he calleth for it muſt be done preſently, without any delay: there is no withſtanding of him. He calleth for famine, and behold famine. He calleth for plenty, and behold plenty. He calleth for peſtilence, and behold peſtilence. He calleth for the ſword, and behold the ſword. All Angels, all men, all beaſts, all fiſhes, all fowls, all creatures whatſoever muſt obey him, and be at his beck. He, is the greateſt commander: his Word commandeth Heaven and earth, and the Sea. All creatures muſt be obedient to his will, and ſubject to his Ordinance.

This

This is the cauſe why all things, both in Heaven, Earth, and the Sea, do keep their immutable and unvariable courſes, times and ſeaſons, even becauſe he hath charged them ſo to do. And they muſt of neceſſity alwaies, at all times, and for ever obey; for the creatures muſt obey the Creator. This Act of Parliament was made the firſt week of the world, and never ſince was or can be repealed.

Phil. *But to call you back again to the point we had in hand: Reſolve me, I pray you, of this; whether many of the dear children of God do not, in this life, ſometimes want outward things, and are brought into great diſtreſs.*

Theol. Yes certainly. For *Elijah* did want, and was in diſtreſs, (1 *King.* 17.) *Paul* did want, and was in many diſtreſſes, (2 *Cor.* 1. 8.) The holy Chriſtians mentioned in the *Hebrews* did want, and were in marvellous diſtreſſes, (2 *Cor.* 11. 25) Many of Gods dear ones have in all ages wanted, (*Heb.*11.36.) and at this day alſo do want, and are greatly diſtreſſed. But this a moſt infallible truth, that howſoever Gods children may want, and be low brought, yet they are never utterly forſaken, but are holpen even in greateſt extremities: yea, when all things are deſperate, and brought even to the laſt caſt.

To this point moſt notably ſpeaketh the Apoſtle, ſaying, (2 *Cor.* 4. 8.) *We are afflicted on every ſide, but yet we deſpair not: we are perſecuted, but not forſaken; caſt down, but we periſh not.* The Prophet *Jeremiah* alſo ſaith, (*Lam.* 3.) *The Lord will not forſake for ever: but though he ſend affliction, yet will he have compaſſion, according to the multitude of his mercies: For he doth not puniſh willingly, nor from his heart, nor afflict the children of men.* The Kingly Prophet ſaith, *Surely the Lord will not fail his people, neither will he forſake his inheritance,* (Pſ.94. 14.) The Lord himſelf ſaith, *For a moment in mine anger I hid my face from thee; but with everlaſting mercy have I had compaſſion on thee,* Iſa. 55. 8. So then we may fully aſſure our ſelves, and even write of it, (as a moſt undoubted and ſealed truth) that Gods

children ſhall never be utterly forſaken in their troubles.

Phil. Sith the care and providence of God is ſo great for his children as you have largely declared: what then I pray you, is the cauſe why God ſuffereth his to be brought into ſo many troubles and neceſſities?

Theol. Their profit and benefit is the cauſe, and not their hurt. For he loveth them, when he ſmiteth them. He favoureth them, when he ſeemeth to be moſt againſt them. He aimeth at their good, when he ſeemeth to be moſt angry with them. He woundeth them, that he may heal them. He preſſeth them that he may eaſe them. He maketh them cry, that afterward they may laugh. He alwayes meaneth well unto them, he never meaneth hurt. He is moſt conſtant in his love towards them. If he bring them into neceſſities, it is but for the tryal of their faith, love, patience and diligence in prayer.

If he caſt them into the fire, it is not to conſume them; but to purge and refine them. If he bring them into great dangers it is but to make them call upon him more earneſtly for help and deliverance.

He preſſeth us that we might cry; we cry, that we may be heard: we are heard, that we might be delivered. So that here is no hurt done; we are worſe ſcared than hurt.

Even as the Mother, when her child is way-ward, threatneth to throw it to the Wolf, or ſcareth it with ſome poker, or bulbegger, to make it cling more unto her, and be quiet; So the Lord oftentimes ſheweth us the terrible faces of troubles and dangers, to make us cleave and cling faſter unto him, and alſo teach us to eſteem better of his gifts, when we enjoy them, and to be more thankful for them; as health, wealth, peace, liberty, ſafety, &c.

So then ſtill we ſee, here is nothing meant on Gods part but good: as it is written, *All things work together for good to them that love God*, (*Rom.* 8.) For, even the afflictions of Gods children are ſo ſanctified unto them by the Spirit, that thereby they are made partakers,

kers of the holineſs of God; thereby they do enjoy the quiet fruit of righteouſneſs, (*Heb.* 12.10,11.) thereby they attain unto a greater meaſure of joy in the Holy Ghoſt, (1 *Theſ.* 1. 6.) thereby the world is crucified to them and they to the world, (*Gal.*6.14.) thereby they are made conformable to the death of Chriſt, (*Phil.*3.10.) thereby they are kept from the condemnation of the World; thereby they learn experience, patience, hope, *&c.*

So that all things conſidered, Gods children are no looſers by their afflictions, but gainers. It is better for them to have them, than to be without them; they are very good for them. For when Gods children are chaſtiſed, it is as it ſhould be; For to them the croſs is mercy, and loſs is gain. Afflictions are their ſcooling, and their adverſity their beſt Univerſity.

It is good for me (ſaith the holy man of God) *that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy ſtatutes.* (*Pſ.* 119.) By his afflictions therefore he learned much, and became a good Scholar in God's Book, and well-ſeen in his Statutes and Laws. He grew to great wiſdom and judgment by his chaſtiſements. All things turned about in God's merciful Providence, to his everlaſting comfort. For I ſay again and again, That all things tend to the good of God's choſen people: And therefore that eſtate which God will have his children to be in, is alwaies beſt for them: becauſe he who can beſt diſcern what is beſt; ſeeth it to be beſt for them; whither it be ſickneſs or health, poverty or plenty, priſon or liberty, proſperity or adverſity. For ſometimes ſickneſs is better for us than health, and poverty than plenty. Are therefore the Children of God ſick? It is beſt for them. Are they poor? It is beſt for them. Are they in any trouble? It is beſt for them; becauſe their good Father will turn it to the beſt. He will oftentimes cut us ſhort of our luſts and deſires, becauſe he ſeeth we will bane our ſelves with them, he in fatherly care will take the knife from us, becauſe he ſeeth we will hurt our ſelves with it. He will keep us ſhort of Health and

Wealth, becauſe he knoweth we will be the worſe for them. He will not give us too much eaſe and proſperity in this world; for he knoweth it will poyſon us. He will not allow us continual reſt, like ſtanding ponds; for then he knoweth we will gather ſome ſcum and filth. He dealeth fatherly and mercifully with us in all things; even then ſeeking our greateſt good, when we think he doth us moſt harm.

And to ſpeak all in a word: he bringeth us into troubles and ſtraits to this end eſpecially, that he may hear of us. For he right well knoweth our nature, he is well acquainted with our diſpoſition; he knoweth we will not come at him, but when we ſtand in need of him; we care not for him ſo long as all goeth well with us. But if we come into diſtreſs, or want any thing that we fain would have, then he is ſure to hear of us, as he ſaith by the Prophet, *In their affliction they will ſeek me early.* (Hoſ. 5. 15.)

And another Prophet ſaith, *Lord, in trouble have they viſited thee: they poured out a Prayer when thy chaſtiſement was upon them.* Iſa. 26. 16. So then now, I hope you do plainly ſee the cauſe why the Lord bringeth his children into ſo many troubles and neceſſities.

Phil. *I do ſee it indeed, and am very well ſatisfied in it. But yet let me ask you one thing further: Are God's children always ſure to be delivered out of their troubles?*

Theol. Yes verily: and (out of doubt) ſo far forth as God ſeeth good for them: For it is written, *Great are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.* (Pſal. 34. 19.) Saint *Peter* ſaith, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.* (2 Pet. 2. 9.) As if he ſhould ſay, He is well beaten to it, and well ſeen and experienced in it, ſo as he can do it eaſily and without any trouble at all. It is ſaid of *Joſeph* being in priſon, *That when his appointed time was come, and the counſel of the Lord had tryed him, the King ſent and looſed him, the Ruler of the people delivered him.* (Pſ. 105. 19, 20.) And again the Scriptures ſaith, *The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth them,*

them, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Angel of the Lord tarrieth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. (*Pſal.* 34. 17.) And in another place, the Lord himſelf ſaith, concerning the righteous man. *Becauſe he hath loved me, therefore I will deliver him. I will exalt him, becauſe he hath known my Name. He ſhall call upon me in trouble, and I will hear him. I will be with him in trouble: I will deliver him, and glorifie him.* (*Pſal.* 91. 17.) So alſo ſaith *Eliphaz* the *Temanite*, *He ſhall deliver thee in ſix troubles, and in the ſeventh, the evil ſhall not touch thee.* (*Job.* 5.) *Come, my people*, ſaith the Lord, *Enter thou into my Chambers, and ſhut the doors after thee: hide thy ſelf for a very little while, until the indignation paſs over.* (*Iſa.* 26. 20.) And the Prophet ſaith, *upon Mount Zion ſhall be deliverance, and it ſhall be holy: and the houſe of Jacob ſhall poſſeſs their hereditary Poſſeſſions.* (*Obad.* 17) Almoſt innumerable places of the Scriptures might be alledged to this purpoſe; but theſe may ſuffice. Therefore let us know for a certainty, that ſo ſure as troubles and afflictions are to the Children of God, ſo ſure alſo is deliverance out of the ſame. As we may write of the one, and make reckoning of it, as ſure as the coat on our back; ſo may we alſo in God's good time, write of the other, and make full account of it, as ſure as the Lord is true. *Abraham* was in trouble, but delivered. *Job* in trouble, but delivered. *David* in great trouble, but delivered. The three Children in the Furnace, but delivered. *Daniel* in the Lyons Den, but delivered. *Jonas* in the Whales belly, but delivered. *Paul* in innumerable troubles, but yet delivered out of all.

Phil. *All this being true that you ſay, it followeth, that God's Children are chaſtiſed only for their good, and ever more ſure of deliverance in his appointed time. Which thing being ſo, methinks there is no cauſe at all why they ſhould be over-heavy, or too much caſt down in their afflictions.*

Theol. Aſſuredly there is no cauſe at all, but rather cauſe why they ſhould rejoyce, clap their hands and ſing care away. For can a Father forſake his Chil-

dren? a King his ſubjects? a Maſter his Servant, or a Shepherd his ſheep? Doth not *Jehovah* ſay, *I will not leave thee nor forſake thee?* (*Heb.* 13.) Doth not our Heavenly Father know we have need of theſe things? Hath not God given us his Word, that we ſhall not want outward things? Hath he not ſaid, they ſhall be caſt upon us? Why then ſhould we be diſmayed? Why ſhould we hang down our heads? Why do we not pluck up good hearts, and be of good chear? God is our dear Father; he is our beſt friend; he is our dayly Benefactor; he keep th us at his own coſt and charges, he grudgeth us nothing, he thinketh nothing too much for us; he loveth us moſt dearly; he is moſt chary and tender over us; he cannot endure the wind ſhould blow upon us; he will have us want nothing that is good for us. If we will eat gold, we ſhall have it. He hath given us his faithful promiſe, that as long as we live, we ſhall never want. Let us therefore rejoyce and be merry. For Heaven is ours, Earth is ours, God is ours, Chriſt is ours, all is ours; as the Apoſtle ſaith, *All is yours, and you are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods.* (1 *Cor.* 3. 22.) The world clap their hands, and crow long before it be day, ſaying, All is theirs, but the Children of God may ſay, and ſay truly, All is ours. For they have a true title and proper intereſt through Chriſt, in all the Creatures. Many are their priviledges, great are their prerogatives, they are free of Heaven, and free of Earth. They are the only free Denizons of the world: Chriſt hath purchaſed them their freedom: Chriſt hath made them free, and therefore they are free indeed. They are free from ſin, free from hell, free from damnation. They are at peace with God, Men and Angels: they are at peace with themſelves: They are at peace with all Creatures: they are young Princes, Angels Fellows, deſcended of the higheſt houſe, of the blood Royal of Heaven, States of Paradice, and heirs apparent to the immortal Crown. Therefore God hath commanded his Angels to guard them, being ſuch young Princes as they are: yea, he hath

hath given a very ſtraight charge to all his Creatures, to look to them, to ſee to them that they want nothing, that they take no hurt: ſo jealous, ſo chary ſo tender he is of them. The Angels muſt comfort *Jacob*: (*Gen.* 32. 12.) the Whale muſt reſcue *Jonas*: (*Jonah* 2.) the Raven muſt feed *Elias*: (1 *King.* 17.) the Sun and Moon muſt ſtay for *Joſhua*: (*Joſ.* 10.) the Sea muſt divide it ſelf, that *Moſes* and his people may paſs thorow: (*Exod.* 14.) the fire muſt not burn the three Children: the Lyons may not devour *Daniel*: (*Dan.* 3. and 6.) All the Creatures muſt change their nature, rather than God's Children ſhould not be holpen and delivered. Oh therefore how great is the happineſs of God's choſen! Who can expreſs it? Who can utter it? they know not their own happineſs: it is hid from them. Affictions do Cloud it: troubles do over-ſhadow it: croſſes do dim it: and there is an interpoſition of the earth betwixt their ſight and it. But this is moſt certain and ſure, that the beſt is behind with the Children of God; all the ſweet is to come; their happineſs doth not appear in this world. *Their life is hid with Chriſt in God. When Chriſt ſhall appear, then ſhall they alſo appear with him in glory.* (1 *John* 3. 21.) *It doth not yet appear what they ſhall be; but when he cometh, they ſhall be made like unto him.* (*Col.* 3. 3, 4.) Their names are already taken, and entred into the book of life, and one day they ſhall be crowned. One day it ſhall be ſaid unto them, *Come ye bleſſed, &c.* (*Pſal.* 16.) One day they ſhall enjoy his preſence, *where is fulneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand there is pleaſures for evermore.* Therefore let all God's ſecret ones rejoyce, ſing, and be merry. For howſoever in this world they be contemned, trodden under foot, made no-bodies, and walk as ſhadows; being counted as the very rags of the Earth, and the abjects of the world: yet the time will come, when their happineſs and felicity ſhall be ſuch as never entred into the heart of man: it is endleſs, unſpeakable, and unconceivable.

Phil. *I do now plainly ſee, that there is no cauſe why*

God's people ſhould be too heavy and dumpiſh in their affliction. I ſee, that though they be not free from all hurtful afflictions. For no rod, no croſs, no chaſtiſement, is hurtful unto them, but all, in the concluſion, cometh to a bleſſed iſſue.

Theol. You have uttered a great and a moſt certain truth. For there is no affliction or tryal, which God impoſeth upon his children, but if they endure it quietly, truſt in his mercy firmly, and tarry his good pleaſure obediently, it hath a bleſſed and a comfortable end. Therefore the people of God may well be merry in the midſt of their ſorrows. They may with patience and comfort ſubmit themſelves to their Fathers corrections, taking them patiently, and even kiſſing his holy Rod, and ſaying in themſelves, Sith my Father will have it ſo, I am content; ſeeing it is his mind, I am willing withal. As old *Eli* ſaid, *It is the Lord, let him do what he will.* (1 *Sam.* 3. 18.) And as *David* in like ſubmiſſion ſaid in a certain caſe, *Behold, here am I: let him do to me as it ſeemeth good in his own eyes.* (2 *Sam.* 15. 26.) And again he ſaith, *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth; becauſe thou Lord haſt done it.* (*Pſal.* 39. 9.) Behold here then the Patience of God's Saints, and their humble ſubmiſſion unto his moſt holy will. They know all ſhall end well, and that maketh them glad to think of it. I conclude then, that the Children of God are happy in what ſtate ſoever they are; happy in trouble, happy out of trouble; (*Deut.* 28.) happy in poverty, happy in plenty; bleſſed in ſickneſs, bleſſed in health; bleſſed at home likewiſe, and abroad; and every way bleſſed. But on the contrary, the wicked are curſed in what ſtate ſoever they are, curſed in ſickneſs, curſed in health; curſed in plenty, curſed in poverty; curſed in proſperity, curſed in adverſity; curſed in honour, curſed in diſhonour: For all things work together for their deſtruction. Nothing doth them any good. They are not any thing the better, either for God's mercies or judgments. All weathers are alike unto them. They are always the ſame, in proſperity and

and adverſity; they are no changelings. And as we ſay, A good year doth not mend them, nor an ill year pair them.

Ph. *You have long inſiſted upon this point. Now proceed to the fourth ſign of a man's damnation, which is the contempt of the Goſpel, and lay open both the greatneſs of the ſin, and the danger of it.*

Theol. This ſin is of another nature than the former. It is a ſin againſt the firſt Table. It toucheth the perſon of God himſelf For to contemn the Goſpel; it is to contemn God himſelf whoſe Goſpel it is. (*Luk.* 10. 16.) If to contemn the Miniſters of the Goſpel, be to contemn *God* and *Chriſt*, (as our Lord Jeſus avoucheth) how much more then to contemn the Goſpel its ſelf? Therefore it is dangerous medling with this ſin. It is too meddle with edged-tools, to meddle with Princes matters, to touch the Ark, to come near the holy Mountain, all which were things full of great peril and danger. Yea, it is to ſpill the Sacrament. It is *Noli me tangere:* It is to rail at a King, it is to ſpit God in the face. It is high treaſon againſt the King of Glory. Therefore this ſin, of all other, can never be endured, and may at no hand be born withal. For can a mortal King endure the contempt of his Laws? Can he put up the contempt of his own perſon? Can he abide any to ſpit at his Scepter, or to throw a ſtone at it? No ſurely he will not. Therefore the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *He that deſpiſeth Moſes's Laws, dyeth without mercy, under two or three witneſſes. Of how much ſorer puniſhment ſuppoſe ye ſhall he be worthy, which treadeth under foot the Son of God, and counteth the blood of the Teſtament as an unholy thing.* (*Heb.* 10. 28.) (wherewith he was ſanctified) *and doth deſpiſe the Spirit of grace?* And again, *if they were puniſhed which obeyed not the word ſpoken by Angels, how ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great Salvation.* (*Heb.* 2. 2, 3.) *If they eſcaped not, which refuſed him that ſpake on Earth, how ſhall we eſcape if we turn away from him that ſpeaketh from Heaven?* (*Heb.* 12. 25.) Therefore our Saviour Chriſt ſaith, That *it ſhall be eaſier for Sodom*

Sodom in the day of judgment, than for the Contemners of the Goſpel. (*Luk.* 10. 12.)

Moreover he ſaith *The Queen of the South ſhall riſe up in judgment againſt all froward deſpiſers of his word. For ſhe came from the uttermoſt parts of the Earth, to hear the wiſdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here.* (*Matth.* 12. 42.) For Chriſt is greater than *Solomon*; his Doctrine and wiſdom far more excellent. And therefore their ſin is the greater which contemn it. They ſhall never be able to anſwer it. For the Spirit ſaith, *He that deſpiſeth the word, ſhall be deſtroyed.* (*Pro.* 13. 13.) St. *Peter* alſo telleth us, that the old world, and men of the firſt age are now in Hell-fire, becauſe they both deſpiſed, and were diſobedient to the Doctrine of Chriſt; (1 *Pet.* 3. 19.) which (though not perſonally, yet in his divine Spirit) *he ſpake by* Noah. (1 *Pet.* 3. 20.) So then we ſee clearly, God will never take it at our hands, that his glorious Goſpel ſhould be ſo univerſally and openly contemned as it is.

Phil. *You have ſpoken moſt truly, and alſo ſhewed it out of the Scriptures that the contempt of the Goſpel is a moſt hainous ſin, yet for all that, it is moſt lamentable to conſider, how little men eſteem it, and how light they make of it. Many regard it no more than an Egg-ſhell, they think it not worth a galley half-penny; they will not go to the door to hear it; they take it to be a breath from us, and a ſound to them, and ſo the matter is ended.*

They eſteem it but as a noiſe, or empty ſound in the air; or as a voice afar off, that a man underſtandeth not; they never felt the power of it in their hearts: Therefore they prefer their Sheep, their Farms, their Oxen, their Profits, their Pleaſures, yea, every thing before it: they know it not to be any ſuch precious jewel, as it is. Although our Lord Jeſus himſelf compare it to a hid treaſure, and a moſt precious pearl, yet theſe filthy ſwine of the world tread it under feet, for they know not the price of it. Though Solomon *the wiſe ſaith, All the Merchandize of gold and ſilver, pearl and precious ſtones, are not to be compared to it;* (*Prov.* 3. 14.) *yet theſe Beaſts, theſe*

dogs

dogs and hogs of the world contemn it. They esteem a Cow more than Christ's most glorious Gospel.

They are like Esop's *Cock, which made more account of a Barley corn, than all the precious stones in the world; they are like little children, that esteem their rattle more than a bag of Gold; they are like the* Gadarens, *which esteemed their hogs more than Christ and his Gospel; they make nothing of it: they think it not worth the while. Many of them sit idle in the streets, even upon the Sabbaths; while the Gospel is preached in their Churches; many are at Cards and Tables in the Ale-houses. Many on the Sabbath sleep upon their beds all the Sermon-while in the afternoon. Many will hear a Sermon in the forenoon, and they take that to be as much as God can require at their hands, and that he is somewhat beholden to them for it; but as for the afternoon, they will hear none: then they will to Bowls or Tables. These men serve God in the forenoon, and the Devil in the after-noon. Some run after Whores and Harlots on the Sabbath, some run to Dancing and Bear-baiting, some sit upon their Stalls, some sit in their Shops, some by the fire-side, some sit idle in the Streets, some go to the Stool-ball, and others look on. O miserable wretches! O cursed Caitiffs! O monstrous Hell-hounds, which so grosly and openly contemn the Gospel of Christ! what will become of them in the end? Assuredly their damnation sleepeth not. A thousand deaths wait for them; they lye open on all sides to the wrath of God. And we may wonder at his marvellous patience, that he doth not throw down balls of wild-fire from Heaven to consume and burn up both them, their shops and houses, and even make them spectacles of his vengeance, for so notorious contempt of such sacred, holy and high things.*

Theol. You have spoken very truely, zealously and religously; and I do geatly commend you for it. And I must needs affirm the same things, for they cannot be denyed, and for mine own part, I think the Gospel was never so openly contemned in any age (of a people living under the profession of it, and under a godly and Christian Prince) as it is in this age.

For

For howſoever ſome make a ſhew of Religion, yet they have denied the power thereof. They turn the grace of God into wantoneſs, as St. *Jude* ſaith, *ver.* 4. They make the Goſpel a cloak for their ſins. They receive it, and imbrace it, as it will beſt ſtand with their profits and pleaſure, their luſts and likings, their credits and policies, and not a jot further. They will practiſe it at their pleaſure. *Theſe men profeſs they know God: but by their works deny him, and are abominable, diſobedient, and to every good work reprobate. Tit.* 1. 16. This age is full of ſuch carnal proteſtants.

Phil. *This age indeed aboundeth with many hollow-hearted hypocrites, diſſemblers, and time-ſervers, which howſoever they make a face, and bear a countenance, as though they loved the Goſpel, yet their heart is not with it. Their heart is with Atheiſm, their heart is with Popery, they have a Pope in their belly, they be Church-Papiſts. Howſoever, now and then they come to the Church, and hear a Sermon, and ſhew a good countenance to the Preacher, yet their heart goeth after covetouſneſs, The Lord complaineth of this by the Prophet, ſaying, This people will ſit before thee, and hear thy words: but they will not do them Ezek.* 33. 32 *For with their mouths they make jeſts: and their heart goes after covetouſneſs. God complaineth of this alſo by the Prophet* Jeremiah, *ſaying, Will you ſteal, murther, and commit adultery, and ſwear falſely, and ſtand before me in this houſe, whereupon my name is called, and ſay, We are delivered, though we have done all theſe abominations? Ier.* 7. 9. *Is this houſe become a den of theives, whereupon my name is called? where we ſee how the Lord doth chide his people, and ſharpely reprove them for abuſing of his Temple, worſhip and ſacrifices, making them a cloak for their ſins, and making his houſe a den of thieves, which ſhould be an aſſembly of Saints. Now all this is a lively deſcription of our time, wherein many uſe the exerciſes of the word, Prayer, and Sacraments, not to kill and mortifie ſin, but to nouriſh and ſhelter their ſins. For they blindly imagine, that if they come to the Church, and pray, and hear*

hear the Sermon, they are discharged of their sins, though they leave them not. They imagine they have given God his full due; and that therefore they may be the more bold to sin afterward. These kind of hypocrites are like rogues which use medicines not to cure sores, but to make sores. These are like the Papists, which think if they hear Mass in the morning, they may do what they list all the day after.

Theol. I see now you have very well profited in the knowledge of God and true Religion. You have spoken soundly, and like a man of knowledge in Gods matters. For the common sort of people think indeed, that all Religion consisteth in the outward service of God, though their hearts be far from him. To whom God may justly say, *This people draweth near me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, Matth.* 15. 8. Of whom also God may justly take up all his just complaints of his people *Israel* and *Judah*, which are so frequent in all the Prophets: to wit, that he did abhorre their sacrifices, loath their oblations, detest their incense, despise their new-Moons, disdain their Rams, Lambs, *Isa.* 66. and Goats, accounting them all but as mans blood, dogs blood, swines blood; and all because their hands were full of blood; because they executed not Justice and judgment in the gate; because they were not obedient to his will: because they hearts were not with him; because they used, or rather abused all these things as shelters for their sins.

Phil. *The great contempt of the Ministers of the Gospel in this age doth strongly argue the contempt of the Gospel it self. For a man cannot love the Gospel, and hate the faithfull Ministers thereof. But we see by lamentable experience, that the most grave, godly, and learned ministers, are had in derision of very base and vile persons. And as* Job *saith, They whose Fathers I have refused to set with the dogs of my flocks, they were the children of fools, and the children of villaines, which were more vile than the earth. For now every rascal dares scoff and scorn at the most grave and ancient Fathers and Pastors of the Church, dares flout them as they walk in the streets, and as they*

ride

ride by the high-ways, and though the holy Ghost giveth them glorious and lofty titles, Tit. 1. 7. *(as the stewards of Gods own house, disposers, of his secrets,* 1. *Cor.* 4. 1. *disbursers of his treasure, keepers of the broad seal, keepers of the keys of heaven, Mat.* 16. 19. *Gods Secretaries, Gods Ambassadors,* 2. *Cor.* 5. 20. *Angels; Rev.* 3. 7. 14. *yea, the very glory of Christ:* 1. *Cor.* 2. 8. *and all this to express the excellency of their calling) yet these vile varlets and venemous vermine of the earth, dare call them proud Prelates, pild Parsons, pelting preists. O monstrous and intolerable impiety! Now its come to pass, that this most sacred Function (which is glorious in the sight of God and his Angels, and it self most honourable) is had in greatest contempt of all callings. For now the earth is full of rank Atheists, and mock-Gods, which scoff at the Gospel, and bleat out their tongues at all religion, These kind of fellows never dissemble for the matter, they make no shew at all, they are no hypocrites, they hide not their sins, but declare them openly like Sodom. They care not if they never come to the Church; they are too full of it. They live like bruite beasts. They think the Scripture are but fables. They rail at the Ministers and Preachers; they make flat opposition against them, and are notorious mockers and past-graces.*

Theol. Of such the Apostle Saint *Peter* foretold, That *in the last dayes should come mockers, and such as would live after their own lusts, &c.* Of such, a godly writer saith, *Verbum Dei secure contemnitur, promissiones inanes esse creduntur, minæ pro fabulis habentur:* That is, *The Word of God is carelesly contemned; his promises are counted vain, and his threatnings fables.* Of such, the Poet saith:

Heu! vivunt homines tanquam mors nulla sequatur;
Aut velut infernus fabula vana foret.

Alas! men live as they should never die;
Or as though speech of hell were a stark lie.

Now is also the time, wherein the world swarmeth with Papists and Atheists; and most men live as if there were no God: For now Religion is hated, true godliness despised, zeal abhorred, sincerity scoffed at, up-

uprightneſs loathed, Preachers contemned, Profeſſors diſdained, and almoſt all good men had in deriſions For now we may juſtly complain with the Prophet. *Judgement is turned backward, and juſtice ſtandeth afar off: Truth is fallen in the ſtreets, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth, and he that refraineth from evil, maketh himſelf a prey,* (Iſa. 59.14.) The Prophet *Micah* bewaileth the times, ſaying, *The good man is periſhed out of the earth, and there is none righteous among men. They all lye in wait for blood; every man hunteth his neighbour with a net*, Mic. 7. 2. The Prophet *Jeremiah* complaineth of the ſame evil in his time; namely, that the people were come to be paſt ſhame in ſinning; (*Jer.* 8: 12.) *Were they aſhamed* (ſaith he) *when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not aſhamed, neither could they have any ſhame.* This is a lively picture, and a very counterpane of our time; for now we have put on a brow of braſs; we are become impudent in ſin. We cannot bluſh, we cannot be aſhamed. We are almoſt paſt ſhame, and paſt grace. O Lord, what will this geer grow to in the end!

Phil. *We may juſtly fear ſome great judgment of God to be near unto us: yea, even to hang over our heads. For the Lord will never leave the contempt of his Goſpel and his Miniſtry unpuniſhed.*

Theol. You have ſpoken a truth; and we have heard before how the old World was plagued for it. And we read how grievouſly the Jews were afflicted by the Romans for this ſin: as our Lord Jeſus did plainly foretel. We read alſo, that after the Lord had preached the Goſpel himſelf, and ſpread it abroad by his Apoſtles, conquering the World thereby, (which thing was ſignified by the white Horſe, (*Rev.* 6. 2.) his Rider, his Bow, and his Crown) and yet ſhortly after, and yet ſhortly after, ſaw that the ſame began to be contemned in the world, and made light of; then he did in moſt fearful manner plague the earth with wars, blood-ſheddings, tumults, dearth, famine, and peſtilence; which are all ſignified by the red horſe, the black horſe, and the

the pale horſe, which did appear at the opening of the ſecond, third, and fourth ſeal. So likewiſe undoubtedly, God will ſeverely puniſh all injuries, wrongs and contempts done to his faithful Embaſſadours, as appeareth, *Rev.*11.5. where it is ſet down, That, *If any would hurt the two witneſſes with their two Olives, and two Candleſticks,* (whereby is ſignified the faithful Preachers of the Goſpel, with all their ſpiritual treaſures and Heavenly light) *fire ſhould proceed out of their mouths, and devour their adverſaries*: that is, The fire of Gods wrath ſhould conſume all that had oppreſſed them, either by mocks, flouts, railings, ſlanders, mpriſonment, or any other kind of indignity. Of this we have a plain example or two in the Scripture. Firſt, we read how fire came down from heaven, and conſumed the contemptuous Captain and his fifty, at the threatning and calling for of *Elijah*, (2 *King.*1.10.) Secondly, how two Bears came out of the forreſt, and tare in pieces two and forty yonkers which mocked *Eliſha*, the Prophet of God, calling him bald-head, bald-head, 2 *King.*2.24. So then by theſe examples it is manifeſt, that howſoever the Lord may wink at theſe things for a time, and make as though he ſaw them not, yet the time will come, when he will rain fire and brimſtone upon all the ſcoffers of his faithful Miniſters, and contemners of his Goſpel. All this is plainly declared in the firſt chapter of the Proverbs of *Solomon*: where is ſhewed how the wiſdom of God, even Jeſus Chriſt the higheſt wiſdom, doth cry aloud all abroad in the world, and manifeſt himſelf in the open ſtreets; but yet is contemned of wicked worldlings, and ſcoffing fools. Therefore ſaith Chriſt, *Prov.* 1. 24, 25. *Becauſe I have called, and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand, but none would regard: ye have hated knowledge, and deſpiſed all my counſel; therefore I will laugh at your deſtruction, and mock when your fear cometh upon you, like a ſudden deſolation; and your deſtruction like a whirl-wind. Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer, they ſhall ſeek me early but they ſhall not find me.* Herein then we ſee his terrible wrath and vengeance threatned from Hea-

Heaven againſt all prophane contemners of Chriſt and his everlaſting Goſpel, or any of the faithful Publiſhers and Proclaimers thereof. Behold therefore, ye deſpiſers, and wonder: conſider well what will become of you in the end. Do not think that the moſt juſt God will alwayes put it up at your hands, that ye ſhould ſo manifeſtly condemn both his Word and moſt zealous Preachers, and Profeſſors thereof. No, no; aſſure your ſelves, he will be even with you at laſt. He will ſmite you both ſideling and overthwart: he will dog you and purſue you with his judgements, and never leave following the chaſe with you, till he hath deſtroyed you, and conſumed you from off the face of the earth. For remember I pray you, what he ſaith in *Deuteronomy*, *If I whet my glittering ſword, and mine hand take hold of judgement, I will execute vengeance on mine enemies, and I will reward them that hate me; I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my ſword ſhall eat the fleſh of mine adverſaries*, Deut. 32. 41, 42.

Phil. *Truly, Sir, we may juſtly fear, that for our contempt of the Goſpel, and general coldneſs, both in the profeſſion and practiſe thereof, God will take it from us, and give it to a people that will bring forth the fruit thereof.*

Theol. We may well fear indeed, leſt for our ſins, eſpecially our loathing of the heavenly *Manna*, the Lord remove our candleſtick, take away our ſilver trumpets, ſet us no more hear the ſweet bells of *Aaron*, cauſe all viſion to fail, and our Sabbaths to ceaſe, and bring upon us that moſt grievous and ſore famine of not hearing the Word of the Lord, ſpoken of by *Amos* the Prophet, *Amos* 8. 11. Then ſhall our *Halcyon* days and golden years, be turned into weeping, mourning, and lamentation. God for his infinite mercy ſake, turn it away from us.

Phil. *Amen, Amen; and let us pray earneſtly, night and day, that thoſe fearfull judgments may, according to Gods infinite mercy, be held back, which our ſins do contintally cry for; and that his moſt glorious Goſpel may be continued to us and our poſterity, even yet with greater ſucceſs.*

Aſun-

Aſun. *No doubt it is a very great ſin to deſpiſe the Word of God; and I think there is none ſo bad that will do it. For we ought to love Gods word, God forbid elſe. He that loveth not Gods Word, it is pity he liveth.*

Theol. Theſe are but words of courſe: It is an eaſie matter to ſpeak good words: and very many will ſay as you ſay. But both you and they in your practiſe, do plainly ſhew that you make no reckoning of it, you eſteem it no more than a diſh-clout. I think, if the matter were well tryed, you have ſcant a Bible in your houſe. But though you have one, it is manifeſt that you ſeldom read therein with any care or conſcience, and as ſeldom hear the word preached. How elſe could you be ſo ignorant as you are?

Aſun. *I grant that I and ſome others are ſomewhat negligent in the hearing and reading of the Word of God; but you cannot ſay therefore we do contemn it.*

Theol. Yes verily: your continual negligence and careleſneſs doth argue a plain contempt. Sure it is you have no appetite nor ſtomach to the Holy word of God. You had rather do any thing, than either read or meditate in it: it is irkſom unto you; you read not two chapters in a week. All holy exerciſes of Religion are moſt bitter and tedious unto you: they are as Vinegar to your Teeth, and ſmoak to your eyes. The immoderate love of this World, and of vanity hath took away your appetite from all heavenly things. And whereas you ſhift it off with negligence, as though that would excuſe you: the Apoſtle hits you home, when he ſaith, *How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation?* (*Heb.* 2. 3.) Mark, that he ſaith, *If we neglect.*

Antil. *Belike you think men have nothing elſe to do, but to read the Scripture, and hear Sermons.*

Theol. I do not ſay ſo: I do not ſay you ſhould do nothing elſe. For God doth allow you with a good conſcience, and in his fear, to follow the works of your calling, as hath been ſaid before. But this I con-

condemn in you and many others, that you will give no time to private Prayers, reading and Meditation in God's Word, neither morning nor evening; neither before your business, nor after. And although you have often vacant time enough, yet you will rather bestow it in vanity, and idle prating, and gossiping, than in any good exercise of Religion. Which doth plainly shew, that you neither delight in holy things, neither is there any true fear of God before your eyes.

Antil. *I tell you plainly we must tend our business, we may go beg else, we cannot live by the Scriptures. If we follow Sermons, we shall never thrive. What, do you think every man is bound to read the Scriptures? Have we not our five wits? Do we not know what we have to do? You would make Fools of us belike. But we are neither drunk nor mad.*

Theol That every man (of what condition soever) is bound in Conscience to hear and read the Word of God, hath been shewed and proved in the beginning of our Conference: but as for your five wits, they will not serve your turn in these matters; though you had fifteen wits. For all the wit, reason and understanding of natural men, in God's matters, is but blindness and meer foolishness. The Apostle saith, That *the wisdom of the most wise in this world is not only foolishness with God, but indeed very enmity against God*, (1 *Cor.*3.19. *Rom.*8.7.) And again he saith, That *the natural man* (with all his five wits) *understandeth not the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned.* (1 *Cor.* 2. 14.) Most prudently to this point speaketh *Elihu*, saying, *There is a Spirit in man, but the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.* (*Job.* 32. 8.)

Antil. *I understand not these Scriptures which you do alledge; they do not sink into my head.*

Theol. I think so indeed: for the Holy Ghost saith, *Wisdom is too high for a fool.* (*Prov.* 24. 7.)

Antil. *What do you call me fool? I am no more fool than your self.*

Theol.

Theol. I call you not fool: but I tell you what the Scripture ſaith; which calleth all men (though otherwiſe never ſo wiſe, politick and learned) very fools, till they be truly enlightned and inwardly ſanctified by the Spirit of God: as appeareth, (*Tit.* 3. 3.) where the Apoſtle affirmeth, that both *Titus* and himſelf, before they received the illuminating Spirit of God's grace, were very fools, without wit, and without all ſenſe in God's matters.

Phil. I *pray you, good Mr.* Theologus, *let him alone; for he will never have done cavilling. I ſee he is a notable caviller. Let us therefore proceed to ſpeak of the fifth ſign of condemnation, which is ſwearing.*

Theol. It may well indeed be called a ſign of condemnation. For I think it more than a ſign, it is indeed an evident demonſtration of a Reprobate. For I never knew any man truly fearing God in his heart, that was an uſual and a common ſwearer.

Phil. *I am flat of your mind for that. For it cannot be that the true fear of God and ordinary ſwearing ſhould dwell together in one man, ſith ſwearing is a thing forbidden by a flat ſtatute: And God addeth a ſore threat to his Law, that he will not hold him guiltleſs that taketh his name in vain; but will moſt ſharply and ſeverely puniſh that man.*

Theol. You ſay true, And God ſaith moreover, That if we do not fear and dread his glorious and fearful Name *JEHOVAH*, he will make our plagues wonderful. (*Deut.* 28. 58.) He ſaith alſo by his Prophet *Malachy*, That he will be as a ſwift witneſs againſt ſwearers. (*Mal.* 3. 5.) The Prophet *Zachary* ſaith, That the flying book of God's curſe and vengeance, ſhall enter into the houſe of the Swearer, and he ſhall be cut off. (*Zach.* 5. 4.)

Therefore let all Swearers take heed, and look to themſelves in time, for we ſee there is a rod [illegible] laid up in ſtore for them.

Phil. *Theſe threatnings being ſo great and grievous, and that from the God of Heaven himſelf, a man would think it ſhould cauſe mens hearts to quake and tremble,*

and

and make them afraid to rap out ſuch Oaths as they do, if they were not altogether hardned, paſt feeling, and paſt grace.

Theol. True indeed, but yet we ſee by lamentable experience, how men are given over both to ſwear and forſwear: for at this day there is no ſin more common amongſt us, than ſwearing; for many there be which cannot ſpeak ten words, but one ſhall be an Oath. And numbers have got ſuch a wicked cuſtom of ſwearing, that they can by no means leave it, no more than a Black-more can change his skin, or a Leopard his ſpots: for it is made natural to them through cuſtom, and they have got the habit of it. I do verily think, if it were high treaſon to ſwear, yet ſome could not leave ſwearing. And ſure I am (as light as we make of it) that it is high treaſon againſt the Crown of Heaven: yea, it is a ſin immediately againſt God, even againſt his own perſon: and therefore he hath forbidden it in the firſt Table of his Law.

Phil. *Queſtionleſs this vice of ſwearing is, of all other ſins, moſt rife in this Land. For you ſhall have little boys and children in the ſtreets, rap out oaths in moſt fearful manner. It would make a man's heart quake to hear them. We may think, they have ſucked them out of their mothers breaſts: but ſure we are, they have learned them from the evil example of their Parents. And now adays we cannot almoſt talk with a man, but (in ordinary ſpeech) he will belch out one or another.*

Theol. I will tell you a ſtrange thing; and with great grief I ſpeak it, I do verily think there are ſworn in this Land an hundred thouſand Oaths every day in the year.

Phil. *No doubt, Sir, you are within compaſs. For now almoſt ſo many men, ſo many oaths; excepting ſome few in compariſon. Nay, I know divers of mine own experience, which if they may be kept in talk, will ſwear every day in the year an hundred oaths for their parts.*

Theol. O what a lamentable thing is it, wee may well take up the old complaint of the Prophet *Jeremiah*

miah, who ſaith, that in his time, *The Land did mourn becauſe of oaths.* (*Jer.* 23. 10.) And we may well wonder that the Land ſinketh not becauſe of Oaths. For if God were not a God of infinite patience, how could he endure his moſt ſacred and glorious name to be ſo many thouſand times blaſpheemed in one day, and that by ſuch miſerable wretches as we be!

Phil. *We may indeed admire and wonder at the patience and long-ſuffering of God, that he ſpareth us ſo long, and giveth us ſo large a time of Repentance. But ſure it is, that the Prophet ſaith, That howſoever the Lord is ſlow to anger, yet he is great in power, and will not ſurely clear the wicked.* (*Nah.* 1. 3.) *Though he may wink at their monſtrous oaths for a time, yet he forgetteth them never a whit, but ſcoreth them up, and regiſtreth them in his book of accounts: ſo as they ſtand in record againſt them. And when the great day of reckoning ſhall come, he will ſet them all in order before them, and lay them to their charge.*

Let not the wicked ſwearers and blaſphemers thereof, think that they ſhall alwaies ſcape ſcot-free, becauſe God letteth them alone a while, and deferreth their puniſhment. For the longer God deferreth, the more terrible will his ſtrokes be when they come. The longer an arrow is held in the bow, the ſtronger will be the ſhot when it cometh forth. Though God have leaden feet, and cometh ſlowly to execute wrath, yet he hath an iron hand, and will ſtrike deadly when he cometh. (*Job.* 24. 23.) *Though God giveth the wicked ſecurity for a time,* (*ſa*: Job) *yet his eyes are fixed upon all their waies. And in ther place he ſaith, The wicked are reſerved unto the of deſtruction, and they ſhall be brought forth unto to-day of wrath.* (*Job.* 21. 30.) *So then the holy man* Job *plainly affirmeth, that the ſtate and condition of all t rich and wealthy worldlings, is as the condition of an Ox, that is fatted up againſt the day of ſlaughter.* (*Job.* 21. 13.) *For he ſaith, They ſpend their daies in wealth, and ſuddenly go down to hell. But now I pray you nomi-*

nate

nate the Oaths which are ſo rife and common amongſt us.

Theol. There be ſix Oaths which are (of all other) moſt rife and common, in every mans Mouth; and they be theſe:

1. By my Faith. 2. By my Troth. 3. By our Lady. 4. By St. *Mary*. 5. By God. 6. As God ſhall judge me.

For you cannot rightly talk with a man, but he will flaſh out ſome one of theſe in his ordinary ſpeech.

Aſun. *Do you count it ſo great a matter for a man to ſwear by his Faith, or his Troth?*

Theol. Yes indeed do I. For our Faith and our Troth, are the moſt precious Jewels we have. Shall we then lay them to gage for every word we ſpeak? It ſheweth we are of ſmall credit, nay very bankrupts. For who but a bank-rupt will lay the beſt jewel in his houſe to pledge for every ſmall trifle.

Aſun. *I know a man that will never ſwear, but by Cock, or Py, or Mouſe-foot. I hope you will not ſay theſe be Oaths, for he is as honeſt a man as ever brake bread. He ſhall not hear an oath come out of his mouth.*

Theol. I do not think he is ſo honeſt a man as you make him; for it is no ſmall ſin to ſwear by Creatures. The Lord ſaith by his Prophet *Jeremiah*, *They have forſaken me, and ſworn by them that are no Gods.* (*Jer.* 5. 7.) So then to ſwear by Creatures, is to forſake God: and I trow you will not ſay, he is an honeſt man which forſaketh God.

Aſun. *I do not believe, that to ſwear by ſmall things is a forſaking of God.*

Theol. You, and ſuch as you are, will believe no part of the Word of God, than will ſtand with your fancie. But whatſoever you believe, or believe not, the Word of God ſtandeth ſure: and no jot of it ſhall ever be proved falſe. But this I will ſay unto you, becauſe you think it ſo ſmall a matter to ſwear by Creatures, That the more vile and baſe the thing is that you ſwear by, the greater is the oath: becauſe you aſcribe that unto a baſe Creature, which is only proper to God: namely, to know our hearts, and be

a diſcerner of ſecret things. For whatſoever a man ſweareth by, he calleth it as a witneſs unto his conſcience, that he ſpeaketh the truth, and lyeth not: which thing onely belongeth unto God. And therefore in ſwearing by Creatures, we rob God of his honour: therefore to ſwear by the croſſe of the money, or by bread, or by mouſe foot, or the fire, which they call Gods Angel, or any ſuch like, isa robbing God of his honour, and an aſcribing of that to the Creature, which is proper only to the Creator.

Aſun. *What ſay you then to them that ſwear by the Maſs, and by the Rood?*

Theol. Their ſin is as great as the other: for it is an hainous thing to ſwear by Idols; as St. *Mary* our Lady, by the Maſs, by the Rood, &c. The Prophet *Amos* ſaith, *they that ſwear by the ſin of Samaria, and that ſay, thy God, O Dan, liveth: even they ſhall fall, and never riſe up again. Amos.* 8. 14. To ſwear by the ſin of *Samaria*, is to ſwear by Idols: for *Samaria* was full of Idols.

Moreover the Lord threatneth by the Prophet *Zephanie*, that he will cut of them *that ſwear by the Lord, and by* Malcham, or by their King, *Zeph.* 1. 5, For the Idolaters called their Idol *Molech* their King.

Aſun. *Seeing you condemn both ſwearing by Creatures and ſwearing by Idols; what then muſt we ſwear by, You would have us ſwear by nothing, belike.*

Theol. In our ordinary commmunication we muſt not ſwear at all, either by one thing or another: but (as our Lord teacheth us) *our communication muſt be Yea, yea, Nay, nay: For whatſoever is more than theſe, cometh of evil Mat.* 5. 37. And St. *James* ſaith *Before all things, my Brethren, ſwear not, neither by Heaven, nor by Earth, nor by any other oath: but let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay, leſt you fall into condemnation. Jam.* 5. 12.

Antil. *It ſeemeth you are an Anabaptiſt, you condemn all ſwearing, you will have no ſwearing at all.*

Theol. Not ſo: for though I condemn ſwearing by creatures, ſwearing by Idols, and vain ſwearing, yet I do allow of ſwearing before a Magiſtrate; and pri-

vate-

vately alſo, in matters of weight and importance to the further bolting out of the truth.

This is warranted from Gods one mouth, where he ſaith, *Thou ſhalt ſwear, The Lord liveth in truth, in judgement, and in righteouſneſs. Jer.* 4. 2. And in theſe caſes only the name of God is to be ſworn by, as it is written, *Thou ſhalt fear the Lord thy God, and thou ſhalt ſerve him, and ſhall cleave unto him, and ſhalt ſwear by his Name. Deut.* 10. 20.

Aſun. *May we not ſwear by God, in our common talk?*

Theol. At no hand. For that is to take the name of God in vain, which you know is forbidden. And one of the wiſe Heathens could ſay thus, (*Iſocrat. ad Demon.*) *When an oath is laid upon thee, undertake it for two cauſes: either for to deliver thy ſelf from ſome greivous crime and accuſation, or elſe to preſerve thy freinds from danger.* So then, that Heathen man in common talk will not allow any oath, much leſs to ſwear by God. Another ſaith, (*Phocyl.*) *Avoid an oath, though thou ſwear truly.* So then we ſee vain ſwearing condemned even by Heathens.

Aſun. *Yea, but for all that we muſt ſwear, men will not believe us elſe.*

Theol. Neither yet will they believe you any whit the more for your ſwearing. For it doth manifeſtly appear, that thouſands make no more conſcience at all of it, than of cracking of nuts: and therefore what wiſe man will believe them, though they ſwear never ſo much? But if you would make conſcience always to ſpeak the truth from your heart, without any oaths at all, you ſhall be better believed of all honeſt and wiſe men, than otherwiſe with a thouſand oaths.

Antil. *It is the cuſtom to ſwear.*

Theol. But a wicked and diveliſh cuſtom.

Antil. *I hope, ſir, we may ſwear, as long as we ſwear truly, and ſwear by nothing but that which is good.*

Theol. It hath been anſwered before, that in vain matters you may not ſwear at all. Antil. *As long as we do worſe then that, I hope God will hold us excuſed.*

Theol. God will not hold you excuſed when you

break his commandements, and continue ſo doing.

Antil. *what ſay you then to them that ſwear wounds and blood, and ſuch like, in a bravery, thinking that it ſetteth out their ſpeech very well?*

Theol. Hell gapeth for them: and they ſhall one day know what it is to blaſpheme *God.*

Antil. *What may we think of ſuch as ſwear by Gods life, Gods Soul, Gods body, Gods heart?*

Theol. That their caſe is moſt wofull and dangerous; and I quake at the naming of them. They are moſt horrible, monſtrous, and outrageous blaſphemies: enough to make the ſtones in the ſtreets to crack, and the clouds to fall upon our heads. And we may think that all the devils in Hell are in readineſs to carry ſuch blaſphemous villains headlong into that Lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone for ever.

Antil. *Do you find in Scripture, that God will ſo ſeverely puniſh ſwearers?*

Theol. Yes verily. For beſides that which hath been ſpoken before, we have divers other examples. Firſt of *Senacherib*, the King of *Aſſyria*, who for his outrageous blaſphemies againſt the God of heaven, was in moſt fearfull and tragical manner, ſlain by his one Sons *Adramalech* and *Sharezer*, and that in the Temple when he was a worſhiping his Idol-God *Niſroch.* 2. *King.* 19 37. And yet behold a more fearfull example of Gods wrath againſt blaſphemers.

We read that an hundred thouſand of the *Aramites* were ſlain by the *Iſraelites*, in one day for blaſpheming God 1. *King.* 20. 29. and ſeven and twenty thouſand being left, and fleeing into the City of *Apheck* for refuge, were all ſlain by the fall of an huge great wall. What ſhall I here ſpeak how the ſeven ſons of *Saul* the King of *Iſrael* were hanged up before the Lord in mount *Gibeah*, for the breach of the oath made to the *Gibeonites* long before? 1. *Sam.* 31. In theſe examples we may plainly ſee, that the juſt God, even in this life, ſometimes will be revenged on blaſphemers and oath-breakers. And therefore the very Heathens in all ages have been very careful for the perform-

forming of oaths: as *Pharaoh* King of *Ægypt* willed *Joseph* to go up into the Land of *Canaan* to bury his Father according to his oath made to his father.

Phil. *Methinketh these so terrible and fearfull examples of Gods vengeance against swearers and blasphemers, should strike some terrour into the hearts of our blasphemers.*

Theol. One should think so indeed, if any thing could do it. But, alas, they are so hardned in it, and in all other sin, that nothing can move them, except peradventure there were a law made, that every swearer and blasphemer should hold his hand a quarter of an hour in boyling lead. This or some such like severe Law might peradventure curb them a little, and make them bite in their oaths. But otherwise they will never fear any thing, till they are in Hell-fire, when it will be too late to repent.

Phil. *What may be the cause of this so often and great swearing? for surely it is no inherent and in-bred sin in our nature as some of the other sins be.*

Theol. No verily. But these three I judge to be the causes of it. Custome. Want of admonition. Want of punishment.

Phil. *What then are the remedies of it?*

Theol. The remedies are these.

Dis-use. Prayer. Friendly admonition. Some sharp Law.

Phil. *Well Sir, now we have heard enough of swearing: I pray you proceed to the next sign of condemnation, which is lying.*

Theol. Swearing and lying be of very neer kindred: For he that is a common swearer, is for the most part a common lyer also: For he that maketh no conscience of swearing, will make no conscience of lying. And as the Lord hateth the one, so also he hateth the other: and as he punisheth the one, so wil he punish the other. Therefore *Solomon* saith Pro. 12. 22. *lying lips are an abomination to the Lord.* Rev. 22. 15. Saint *John* saith, *Without shall be dogs, enchanters, whore-mongers, murtherers, and whoso-ever loveth or maketh lyes.* Rev. 21. 8. Again, the same holy man of God saith, *The lyers shall*

have their part and portion in the Lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone, which is the ſecond death.

Phil. *Theſe Scriptures which you alledge, do manifeſtly declare, that God abhorreth lyers and hath reſerved great torments for them. Therefore the Princely Prophet* David *ſaith, That he would baniſh all Lyers from his houſe.* Pſal. 101. 7. *He that telleth lyes, (ſaith he) ſhall not remain in my ſight.* Pro. 6. 16. 17. *A lying tongue is one of the ſix things which God doth hate, and his ſoul abhor.* Jer. 9. 5. *Yet for all this, we ſee by lamentable experience, how many have even taught their tongues to lye, (as the Prophet ſaith) and there is no truth in their lips. This vice is allmoſt as common as ſwearing. For it is hard to find a man that will ſpeak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth from his heart, in ſimplicity and plainneſs, at all times, in all places, and amongſt all perſons, without all glozing or diſſembling, either for fear, gain, flattery, menpleaſing, hiding of faults, or any ſiniſter reſpect whatſoever. Where I ſay, is this man to be found? I would fain ſee him, I would fain look upon ſuch a man: it would do my heart good to behold him: I would rejoyce to ſet mine eyes upon ſuch a man.*

Theol. Such a man as you ſpeak of, is hardly to be found amongſt the ſons of men. They be black Swans in the earth, they be white Crows, they be rare birds. For there be very few that will ſpeak the truth from their heart: yet ſome ſuch I hope there be. But for the moſt part, and amongſt the the greater ſort, lying, diſſembling and fraud, to bear all the ſway. There is no truth, no honeſty, no conſcience, no ſimplicity, no plain dealing amongſt men in theſe moſt corrupt times. Faith and Truth are parted clean away. And as the Kingly Prophet ſaith, *The faithful are failed from among the Children of men. They ſpeak deceitfully every one with his Neighbour; flattering with their lips, and ſpeaking with a double heart.* Pſ. 12. 1, 2. Men now adays ſtudy the Art of Lying, Flattering, Fawning, Gloſing and Diſſembling: they have a heart and a heart. They have hony in their mouth, and gall in their heart. Their tongues are as ſoft as butter and oyl: but their heart are full of bitter-

bitterneſs, poyſon and wormwood. They are full of outward courteſie and Civility, full of Court-holy-water, when there is no Truth nor plainneſs in their inward affection. They will ſpeak you fair, when they would cut your throat. They will ſhew you a good Countenance, when they would eat your heart with Garlick. In outward ſhew they will carry themſelves plauſibly, when their hearts are full of venome and malice. This Viperous brood do but watch their times and opportunities, till they can get a man upon the hip; and then they will ſting him, and work their malice upon him. Theſe fawning curs will not bark, till they bite, they will lurk and lye cloſe, till they ſpie their vantage, and then they will ſhew themſelves in their kind: then they will hoyſt a man, and turn him over the perk, if they can. Theſe men are like the waters, which are moſt deep when they are moſt calm; like a dangerous rock hid under a calm Sea, or as the Heathens ſay, Like the Syrens Song, which is the Sailers wrack: like the Fowlers whiſtle, which is the birds death: like the hid bait, which is the fiſhes bane: like the Harpies, which have Virgins faces, and Vultures talons; or like *Hyena*, which ſpreadeth like a friend, and devoureth like a foe; or, as the Scripture ſaith, like *Joab*, (2 *Sam.* 20. 10.) the Captain of the Hoſt, which ſpake kindly to *Amaſa* another Captain, and kiſſed him, when preſently he ſtabb'd him: or like unto the *Herodians* and Phariſees ſervants, which came to our Lord Jeſus with many fawning inſinuations, calling him Good Maſter, and telling him that he was the plain truth, that he taught the way of God truely, he regarded no mans perſon, and many good morrows, and all this geer, when as in very deed their purpoſe was to entangle him in his words, and to entrap him, that they might catch advantage againſt him, and ſo cut his throat and give him pap with a hatchet. This is it which the wiſe man ſaith. Pro. 29. 5. *A man that flattereth his neighbour, ſpreadeth a net for his feet.* And again Pro. 26. 23. *As ſilver-droſs over-laid upon an earthen pot; ſo are fawning lips and an evil heart.* And in another place he

he ſaith, Pro.26.23. to 27. *He that beareth hatred, will counterfeit with his lips: but he layeth up deceit in his heart: when he ſhall ſhew his voice favourably, truſt him not; for there are ſeven abominations in his heart. He will cover hatred by deceit: but his malice ſhall be diſcovered in the Congregation.* In another place he pronounceth a curſe upon all theſe hollow-hearted hypocrites, and meal-mouthed flatterers. For ſaith he, *unto him that bleſſeth his friend with a loud voice, betimes in the morning, riſing up early, a curſe ſhall be imputed.*

Phil. *You have very well deſcribed the conditions of the men of this age, which have faces, countenances, and tongues, but no hearts; which profeſs lying and diſſembling; which ſay, He cannot live that cannot diſſemble; which have fair faces, and falſe hearts; which have forgotten, that plain honeſtey is deep policy.*

Theol. The Holy Ghoſt often in the proverbs of *Solomon*, calleth all unregenerate men fools: or as it is in the Hebrew, men without hearts. Becauſe they have no heart to God, no heart to his word, no heart to his Children, no heart toGodlineſs, no heart to any thing that good is: they are without an honeſt heart, an upright heart, a plain heart: they are all in words, nothing in deeds: they promiſe mountains, and perform mole hills: they will ſpeak well of Religion, and practiſe nothing: they will give fair words to their friends, and do juſt nothing for them.

Phil. *The world is full of theſe masked counterfeits: and lying and diſſembling did never more abound.*

Theol It is too true, that lying and diſſembling are moſt rife, and over-common vices amongſt all ſorts of men: but eſpecially it doth over-flow and ſuper-abound in ſhop-keepers and ſervants. For both theſe make a trade and occupation of it: they can do no other but lye. it cleaveth unto them as the nail to the door

Phil. *I do certainly know ſome ſhop-keepers, which (to utter their bad wares, and to blind the eyes of the ſimple) do trade in lying all the day long, from Sun to Sun, from the opening of the ſhop and windows, to the ſhuting of the ſame. And what is their life (if cuſtomers come in a pace)*

but

but ſwearing, lying, diſſembling and deceiving? They will lye as faſt as a dog will trot, as we ſay. It is a wonder that their ſhops and all their wares do not fire ever their heads, for their ſo common, ſo lewd, and ſo abominable lying: and that againſt their own knowledge, againſt their Conſcience, againſt God, againſt their neighbour, againſt Heaven and Earth, Men and Angels.

Theol. True it is, we may marvel at the long ſuffering of God in this behalf. But this is to be noted, that God doth not immediately puniſh all notorious ſinners in this life, but reſerveth thouſands to the judgment of the great day. In this life he only culleth out ſome few, whom he ſmiteth for the example of others, that they might fear and tremble, and learn by other mens harms to beware.

Therefore even in this life, we ſee before our eyes, ſome lyers, ſome drunkards, ſome whoremongers, ſome ſwearers, ſome miſers of the world, ſome ruffians and cut-throats, ſtricken down by the revenging hand of God: But whereas God ſmiteth one of theſe in this life, he letteth an hundred eſcape. For if he ſhould puniſh all Offenders in this life, to what purpoſe ſhould the judgment ſerve? If he ſhould puniſh none, then we ſhould think there were no God, or that he were ſhut up idle in Heaven, and would do neither good or evil, nor once meddle in the matters of the Earth; as ſome Epicures have dreamed. Therefore to avoid both theſe extremities, God in his Heavenly wiſdom hath thought good to meet with ſome even in this world.

Phil. *I am of this mind, that the goods which men get by ſwearing, lying, and deceit will never proſper.*

Theol. You are not therein deceived, For God will blow upon all ſuch kind of evil-gotten goods, and they ſhall be put in a bottomleſs purſe, as the Prophet ſaith. The Holy Ghoſt in the book of the Proverbs, hath many excellent ſayings to this effect: as chap 13. 11. *The riches of vanity ſhall be diminiſhed; but he which laboureth with the hand ſhall encreaſe them.* (*Hag.* 1. 6.) And again, *He that dealeth deceitfully ſhall become poor: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.*

(*Pro.*10.4.) In another place he ſaith, *The deceitful man roſteth not that which he hath caught in hunting.* (*Pro.*12. 27.) That is, he ſhall not long enjoy or taſte the prey, which he hath gotten by fraud. For either one trouble or other will come upon him, that he ſhall not be able to poſſeſs or take delight in the ſpoil. Therefore it is ſaid, *The bread of deceit is ſweet to a man: but after, his mouth ſhall be filled with gravel* That is, in the end the craftſy perſon ſhall meet with many troubles. For either his conſcience will upbraid him and check him, or vengeance will plague him for his deceit. The fears, cares, and ſorrows which he ſhall have, ſhall be as it were ſo many ſharp ſtones to ſet his teeth on edg, and to vex him. Wherefore inſtead of meat, he ſhall feed on gravel; and inſtead of wheat, on pebble ſtones. Small pleaſure is taken in the end, in goods ill gotten, or livings unlawfully come by. For the Holy Ghoſt hath paſſed ſentence upon them, that they ſhall never proſper.

Phil. *It ſometimes falleth out, that they proſper for a time: but as we ſay, the third heir ſhall never enjoy them: For God will curſe them in our poſterity: and our childrens children ſhall feel the ſmart of our ſins. Therefore the holy man Job ſaith, The off-ſpring of the wicked ſhall not be ſatisfied with bread.* (*Job* 27. 14.) *For out of doubt God will bleſs that only which is got with a good conſcience, in the works of our calling, and it ſhall remain bleſſed unto us, and our poſterity. Therefore the Spirit ſaith, The juſt man, that walketh in his uprightneſs, is bleſſed, and bleſſed ſhall be his children after him.* (*Prov.* 20 7.) *But God will not bleſs, but curſe that which is got with an evil conſcience; as ſwearing, lying, diſſembling, deceiving, &c.*

Theol. Some ancient Writers have ſpoken very prudently to this point. For one ſaith, *injuſta lucra breves habent voluptates, longos autem dolores:* [Jerom.] That is, *unjuſt gain hath long ſorrow, and ſhort joy.* Another ſaith, *Eligas damnum potius quàm turpe lucrum: illud enim ſemel tantum te dolore afficiet, hoc verò ſemper:* [Auguſt.] That is, *Chuſe loſs, rather than filthy lucre: for the one will grieve thee but once, the other for*

ever.

ever. A third ſaith. *Melius eſt honeſtè pauperem eſſe, quam turpitur divitem: Hoc enim commiſerationem, illud verò reprehenſionem adfert:* [Bernar.] *It is better to be honeſtly poor, than wickedly rich. For the one moveth pity, the other reproof.* One of the wiſe Heathens alſo ſaith, [Eurip. Phenef.] *We may not wax rich unjuſtly,* but live of juſt things which he calleth holy things.

Phil. *Have we not examples in the Scriptures of ſuch as have been puniſhed for lying?*

Theol. Yes, for we read how the *Gibeonites,* for their lying and diſſembling were made drudges and ſlaves to the *Iſraelites,* (*Joſ.* 9 23.) *Gehezi* alſo the ſervant of *Eliſha* the Prophet, for his lying and covetouſneſs together, was ſmitten with a moſt grievous leproſie (2 *Kings* 5. 27.) *Ananias* and *Saphira* his Wife for their own lying and diſſembling were ſtricken down ſtark dead by the immediate hand of God, by the rebuke of *Peter.* (*Act.* 55. 10.)

Zophar, one of *Job*'s Friends, ſpeaking of theſe kind of men, ſaith *They ſhall ſuck the gall of Aſps, and the Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay them. They ſhall flie from the iron weapons, and a bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike them thorow.* (*Job* 20. 16, 24.)

Now then by all theſe examples, we may plainly ſee, how greatly God abhorreth lying and diſſembling.

Phil. *O therefore that we could follow the counſel of the Apoſtle, who ſaith, Lye not one to another:* (*Col.* 3. 9.) *ſith you have put off the old man with his works. And again, Caſt away lying, and ſpeak every one the truth to his neighbour.* (*Eph* 4. 25.) *The manner of ſpeech which the Apoſtle uſeth, is very forcible, implying thus much, That we ſhould in a kind of diſdain or deteſtation caſt it away, and throw it from us, as a filthy, ſtinking and berayed clout hanging about a mans neck, which he doth ſuddenly ſnatch away, and hurl into the fire; as being aſhamed that ever it ſhould be ſeen or known. Would to God therefore that we were come to ſuch a deteſtation and loathing of lying, that we would even ſpattle at it; and cry, Fie upon it, and all that uſe! O that we could*

hate

hate it as the Devil, which is the Father of it; and as Hell-fire, which is the reward of it! O that we were come but ſo far as the Heathen man, [Homer. Iliad. 3.] *who ſaith, I hate him as the gates of Hell, who had one thing in his tongue, and another in his heart.*

Antil. *Yet for all this, we find in the Scriptures, that even ſome of the godly have been taken tardy in lying, and yet have not ſinned in ſo doing; as* Abraham, Jacob, Rahab, *the Midwives of* Egypt; *and therefore why may not we do ſo to.*

Theol. I told you before, that you may not make the infirmities of God's people, rules for you to live by. And further I anſwer, that all theſe did offend in their lying. Some of them indeed, I grant are commended for their love to the Church, and charitable affections to God's people, but none of them ſimply for lying, which is a thing condemned even of the Heathen. For ſaith one of them, [Eurip. Phenif.] *Lying doth corrupt the life of man, and every wiſe and godly man doth hate lying.*

Antil. *But may not we lye now and then for advantage.*

Theol. No verily: neither is there any good vantage to be got that way. For when you have made up your accounts, all charges deducted, and all expences defrayed, your clear gains will be very ſmall. For by your wilful and cuſtomary lying, you gain inward grief, and loſe true joy; you gain ſhort pleaſure and loſe perpetual glory; you gain Hell, and loſe Heaven; you make the Devil your friend, and God your enemy. Now then reckon your gain.

Phil. *I pray you let us grow towards a concluſion of this point: and ſhew us briefly the chief cauſes of lying.*

Theol. The chief cauſes of lying are theſe; Cuſtom, Fear, Covetouſneſs, The Devil.

Phil. *What be the Remedies?*

Theol. The remedies be theſe: Diſ-uſe, Godly boldneſs, Contentation, Earneſt Prayer.

Phil. *You have ſpoken enough of this vice, to cauſe all ſuch to abhor it, and forſake it, as have any drop of grace*

grace, or ſpark of God's fear in them: but as for them filthy, let them be more filthy. Now, I pray you, ſpeak your judgment of the ſeventh ſign of condemnation which is drunkenneſs.

Theol. It is ſo brutiſh and beaſtly a ſin, that a man would think it ſhould not need to be ſpoken againſt: but that all reaſonable men ſhould even abhor it, and quake to think of it. For it is a moſt ſwiniſh thing, it maketh of a man a beaſt: it taketh away the heart of man from all goodneſs, as witneſſeth the Prophet *Hoſea. chap.* 4. 11. ſaying, *Whoredom, wine and new wine, take away the heart.* For what heart, what ſtomach, what appetite, can whoremongers and Drunkards have to any thing that is good? either to hear, or to read the Word of God, or to pray, or to meditate in the ſame? Alas, they are far from it, far from God, and far from all grace, and goodneſs. Therefore the Prophet *Joel* ſaith, *Awake ye drunkards: weep and howl ye drinkers of wine.* (*Joel.* 1. 5.) Yea, the mighty God of heaven doth pronounce a woe againſt them, ſaying, *Wo unto them that riſe up early to follow drunkenneſs: and to them that continue until night, till the wine do inflame them,* (*Iſa.* 5. 11) Our Lord Jeſus giveth us a caveat to take heed of it: *Take heed,* ſaith he, *that your hearts be not overcome with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs, and the cares of this life, and ſo that day come upon you unawares.* (*Luk.* 21. 34.) Thus you hear how both Chriſt himſelf, and ſundry of the Prophets, do thunder down from Heaven againſt this groſs beaſtlineſs, which now aboundeth and reigneth amongſt the Sons of men.

Phil. *True indeed: but yet almoſt nothing will make men leave it; for it is a moſt rife and over-common Vice. We ſee many that think themſelves ſome bodies, (and, as we ſay, no ſmall fools) which yet will be overtaken with it, and thereby loſe their credit and reputation with all wiſe men: yea, do prove themſelves to be but ſwine, and brute beaſts: as the Holy Ghoſt avoucheth, ſaying, Wine is a mocker, and ſtrong drink is raging. Whoſoever is deceived therein, is not wiſe.* (*Prov.* 20. 21.)

Theol.

Theol. The wiſe King in the ſame book doth moſt notably and fully deſcribe unto us the inconveniences and miſchiefs which do accompany drunkenneſs, and follow drunkards at the heels. *To whom* (ſaith he) *is wo? to whom is alas? to whom is ſtrife? to whom is babling? to whom are wounds without cauſe? to whom is the redneſs of the eyes! Even to them that tarry long at the wine; to them that go and ſeek out mixt wine.* (*Pro.* 23. 29.) In the ſame Chapter he ſaith, *Be not of the number of them which are bibbers of Wine, or of them which glut themſelves with fleſh; for the drinker and the feaſter ſhall become poor; and the ſleeper ſhall be cloathed with rags.* (*Prov.* 23. 20, 21.) Moreover he ſaith, *Their eyes ſhall behold ſtrange women; and that they ſhall be like him that lyeth in the midſt of the Sea, and ſleepeth in the top of the maſt.* (*Prov.* 23. 33.) In all theſe ſpeeches the Holy Ghoſt doth in moſt lively manner, deſcribe unto us the properties of drunkards; even their ſtaggering, their reeling, their ſnorting, their ſenſleſs ſenſuality. Behold then, what be the curſed fruits and events of drunkenneſs: even theſe which follow; wo, alaſs, grief, miſery, beggery, poverty, ſhame, luſts, ſtrife, babbling, brawling, fightings, quarrelling, ſurfeiting, ſickneſs, diſeaſes, ſwiniſh ſleeping, ſecurity and ſenſuality. So then I conclude that drunkenneſs is a vice more beſeeming an hog, than any reaſonable man. And as one ſaith; It is the Metropolitan City of all the Province of vices. Well therefore ſaith the Heathen writer, [Demo. Olinth.] *When the wine is in, a man is as a running coach without a coach-man.*

Phil. *Let us hear what executions have been done upon drunkards in former ages, that now men may learn to take heed by their examples.*

Theol. Ammon, one of *David*'s ungratious children being drunk, was ſlain by his Brother *Abſolom.* (2 *Sam.* 13. 29.) *Benhadad* King of *Syria* being drunk, was diſcomfited by *Ahab*, King of *Iſrael.* (1 *King* 20. 20.) *Elah*, King of *Iſrael*, being drunk, was ſlain by *Zimri* his Servant, and captain of his Chariots; who alſo ſuc-

ſucceeded him in the Kingdom. 1 *K.* 6. 10. *Lot* being drunk, committed inceſt with his own *daughters*; and therefore was puniſhed in his poſterity. *Gen.* 19. 37. Thus we what executions have been done even upon Kings, for this kind of ſin. Therefore let men learn once at laſt to ſhun vice, and embrace vertue; and as the Apoſtle ſaith, to make an end of their *ſalvation with fear and trembling.* For all our ſhifts and ſtarting-holes will ſerve us to no purpoſe in the end, but when we have fisked hither and thither never ſo much yet at the laſt, we muſt be fain to be ſhut up in God's wrath.

Antil *What I pray you, do you make it ſo great a matter if a man be a little overtaken with drink now and then? There is no man but he hath his faults: and the beſt of us all may be amended. If neighbours meet together now and then at the Ale-houſe, and play a game at Maw for a pot of Ale, meaning no hurt: I take it to be good fellowſhip, and a good means to encreaſe love amongſt neighbours; and not ſo hainous a thing as you make it.*

Theol. I ſee you would fain make fair weather of it, and ſmooth over the matter with ſweet words, as though there were no ſuch great evil in it. But howſoever you mince it, and blanch it over, yet the Apoſtle ſaith flatly, that *Drunkards ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God,* (1 *Cor* 6. 10.) I think this one ſentence is enough to amaze and ſtrike through the hearts of all drunkards in world: for it is as much in effect, as if the Apoſtle had ſaid; All drunkards are notorious reprobates and hell-hounds; branded of Satan, and devoted to perpetual deſtruction and damnation.

But you ſay, you mean no hurt. I anſwer; Whatſoever you mean, your actions are nought, and your fellowſhip as bad. For what good meaning can you have, or what good fellowſhip call you it, for poor labouring men, artificers, and ſuch like, to ſit idle all the day long, in Taverns, and Ale-houſes, miſ-ſpending their time, and their money, in gaming, rioting, ſwearing, ſtaring, ſwilling, bezzelling, bibbing, brawling and brabling? There is no true fellowſhip in it; it is meer impiety,

impiety, if we may call it impiety; for poor men to live idlely, diſſolutely, neglecting their callings, while their poor wives and children ſit crying at home for bread, being ready to ſtarve, to beg or to ſteal. I pray you ſpeak your conſcience, what good fellowſhip is there in this?

Antil. *Yet for all that, there be ſome which abſtain from Ale-houſes, and yet are as bad as any other. For they will back-bite and ſlander their neighbours; they will do them a ſhrewd turn, as ſoon as any other; they are envious, they cenſure us, and diſdain our company, yet we think our ſelves as good as they, for all their ſhews of holineſs.*

Theol. You ſpeak more than you know or can juſtifie, againſt ſome better than your ſelf. But if it were ſo, you ſhould not juſtifie one ſin by another, a leſſer by a greater; which is to no purpoſe.

Antil. *will you then condemn all good fellowſhip?*

Theol. No, no: I do greatly allow godly and Chriſtian fellowſhip: and acknowledge it to be one of the chiefeſt comforts we have in the world I know we are commanded to love *brotherly fellowſhip*, 1 *Pet.* 2.17. But as for your pot-companionſhip, I hate it, and abhor it: for it is written, *He that followeth the idle, ſhall be filled with poverty*, Prov. 28.19. And again, *He that keepeth company with banquetters, ſhameth his Father*, Prov. 28.7. And in another place, *He that loveth paſtime, ſhall be a poor man; and he that loveth wine and oyl ſhall not be rich*, Prov. 21. 17.

Phil. *Good Mr.* Theologus, *talk no more with him, but let us draw near to the winding up of this matter; and tell us, in a word, which be the chief cauſes of drunkenneſs.*

Theol. The cauſes are theſe:

Ill company.	Idleneſs.
Ale-houſes.	A wicked humour.

Phil. *Which be the Remedies?*

Theol. The remedies are theſe:

Avoiding of evil company.	Shuning of Ale-houſes.
Labouring in your callings.	A good courſe of Life.

Phil.

Phil. *Well Sir, you have waded far enough in this point. Let us now come to the eighth ſign of condemnation, which is idleneſs.*

Theol. Concerning idleneſs, this I ſay briefly: that it is the mother of all Vice, and the ſtep-dame of all vertues, yea it is the very bel-dame of all enormities. It is the mother of whoredom, the mother of pride, the mother of theft, the mother of drunkenneſs, the mother of ignorance, the mother of errour, the mother of ſlandering and backbiting, pratling and goſſipping, brawling, ſcolding, quarrelling; and what not? Idleneſs was one of the principal ſins of *Sodom*, as the Prophet *Ezekiel* teſtifieth, ſaying, *Pride, fulneſs of bread, and abundance of idleneſs was in her; and in her Daughters, (Ezek.16,49.) Solomon* is very plentiful, in this matter: For ſaith he, *The ſluggard luſteth and hath nought, (Prov. 13.4.)*

And again, *The ſluggard is wiſer in his own conceit, than ſeven men that can give a ſenſible reaſon, Prov.26.16.* That is, he taketh himſelf the wiſeſt of many, becauſe he ſpareth his body, when others take paines: he ſaith, *Yet a little ſleep, yet a little ſlumber, yet a little folding the hands; and his poverty cometh like a Traveller*; that is, unawares; *and his neceſſity like an armed man*; That is, ſtrongly. *Then he fouldeth his hands together, and eateth his own fleſh,* (Prov. 24.33.) For, *He hideth his hand in his boſom, and it grieveth him to put it to his mouth again,* Eccleſ.4.5.

In another place the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *The ſloathful man will not plough becauſe of winter: therefore he ſhall beg in ſummer, and have nothing,* (Prov.26.15.) Again, *The ſloathful man is brother to him that is a great waſter,* Prov. 18. 9.

Moreover, it is ſaid, that the *ſluggard turns himſelf upon his bed, as the door doth upon the hinges,* Prov.26.14. That is, he keepeth his bed as if he were faſtned to it.

And becauſe the Spirit will abound in this point, it is further written of the ſloathful man, that he ſaith, *An huge Lyon is in the way, I ſhall be ſlain in the ſtreets:* (*Prov.* 26. 13.) That is, when any good matter is in hand,

hand, (as preaching, praying, reading, giving to the poor, &c.) then he draweth back, he ſhrinketh into the ſhell, he findeth one let or other, one excuſe or other. Then profit and pleaſure, buſineſs and idleneſs, matters at home, and matters abroad, company, and a thouſand occaſions will lye in his way, as ſo many Lyons, to let and hinder him. So then we ſee how lively and plentifully the holy Scriptures do paint out the lazy lubbers of this world, and ſons of idleneſs, which are as hardly drawn to any good thing, as a bear to the ſtake. As for the duties of Religion, they go as lively and as chearfully about them, as a thief goeth up the Ladder to be executed for his theft.

Phil. *I do plainly ſee, that this ſin of idleneſs is a very groſs evil, and the root of many vices; yet for all that there be a great number which think they were born to live idlely, as many young Gentlemen, and ſuch like; which imagine they came into the world for no other purpoſe, but to hunt and hawk, card and dice, riot and revel; and ſo ſpend their dayes in pleaſure and vanity. Again, there be many lazie Lozels, and luskiſh Youths, both in Towns and Villages, which do nothing all the day long but walk in the ſtreets, ſit upon the ſtalls, and frequent Taverns and Ale houſes. Many rich Citizens, eſpecially women, do ordinarily lye in bed till nine of the clock, and then forſooth riſe, and make themſelves ready to go to dinner. And after they have well dined, they ſpend the reſt of the day, and a good part of the night alſo, in playing, pratling, babbling, cackling, prating and goſſipping: fie on this idle life. Many profane ſerving-men alſo do falſly ſuppoſe, that they were born only to game, riot, ſwear, whore, ruffle it and roiſt it out, and to ſpend their time in meer idleneſs. But of all theſe, well ſaid the Heathen Philoſopher,* Illos pariter indignantur & dii & homines, quiſquis otioſus (Ariſt.) *Both God and men do hate the idle perſon.*

Theol. It is a lamentable thing to ſee ſo many men and women live ſo idley and ſo unprofitably as they do For alaſs, there be to many which follow no honeſt calling, live to no uſe, no body is the better for them, they do no good, neither to the Church or Commonwealth:

they

they are like Drone-Bees; they are unprofitable burdens of the earth. God hath no uſe of them; the Church no good, the Common wealth no benefit; their neighbours no profit, the poor no releif. They imagine they came into the world to do nothing but eat, drink and ſleep, and riſe up to play: they think that they ſhould ſpend their time in dicing and dancing, in whoredom and bravery, in gluttony, and belly-chear, in maſting themſelves like Hoggs of *Epicurus* Heard, in pampering their panches and cramming their bellies: in fatting themſelves like Boars in a Frank till they be well brawned and (as Job ſaith) *till their bones run full of marrow, their faces ſtrout with fatneſs, and they have collops in their flank. Job* 15. 27. Oh, what a beaſtly life is this! Fie upon it, fie upon it. It is more meet for Epicures, than Chriſtians; for ſwine than for men; *Sardanapalus* and *Heliogabalus*, and ſuch like belly-Gods, than for the Profeſſors of the Goſpel. But of all ſuch, *Job* ſaith enough, *They ſpend their days in pleaſure, and ſuddenly go down to Hell, Job.* 21. 13.

Phil. *But may it not be allowed unto Lords and Ladies, Gentlemen and Gentlewomen, and other great ones, to live idlely, ſith they have wherewith to maintain it?*

Theol. God doth allow none to be idle; but all great and ſmall, are to be imployd one way or other: either for the benefit of the Church or Commonwealth; or for the good government of their own houſhoulds; or for the good of Towns or Pariſhes, and thoſe amongſt whom they do converſe; or for the ſuccour and releif of the poor; or for the furtherance of the Goſpel, and for the maintenance of the miniſtry; or for one good uſe or other. To theſe ends, our wits, our learning, our reading, our skil, our policy, our wealth, our health, our wiſedom our authority, are to be referred, knowing this; that one day we ſhall come to give an account of our Bailywick, and to be reckoned withal for the employments of our Talents. For this cauſe *Job* ſaith, that, *Man is born to travel, as the ſparks flie upward. Job.* 5. 7. And God hath laid this upon *Adam* and all his

his posterity, *in the sweat of thy brows thou shalt eat thy bread. Gen.* 3. 19. Some do set down four causes why every man should labour diligently in his calling.

First, to bear the yoak laid upon all mankind by the Lord.

Secondly, to get the necessarys of this life.

Thirdly, to live to the profit of humane society.

Lastly, to avoid evil thoughts and actions.

St. *Paul* findeth great fault with some in the Church of *Thessalonica*, because they walked inordinately, that is, idlely, and out of a lawfull calling, and therefore concluded, That such as would not labour, should not eat, So then, we do plainly see, that God alloweth idleness in none. For when we are idle, (as hath been shewed before) we lie open to the Devil, and his temptations, and he gets within us, and prevaileth against us. While *David tarryed* idlely at home in the beginning of the year, when Kings used to go forth to battel, he was soon overtaken with these two foul sins of Adultery and Man-slaughter. So long as *Sampson* warred with the Philistines, he could never be taken or overcome: but after he gave himself to idleness and pleasure, he not only committed Fornication with the Strumpet *Dalilah*, but also was taken of his enemies, and his eyes miserably pulled out, these examples do shew what a dangerous sin idleness is. Therefore the Holy Ghost sends us to School to the little Creature, The Ant to learn of her both to avoid idleness, and also to use Wisedom and Providence in our actions: *Go to the Pismire, O sluggard, behold her ways, and be wise: For she, having no guide, task-master, nor ruler, prepareth her meat in the Summer, and gathereth her food in the Harvest Prov.* 6. 6. And in good sooth it is wonderful to observe what infinite pains, and unwearied labour, this silly Creature taketh in Summer, that she may be well provided for against Winter. Let us therefore learn wisedom from her example: and let us set before our eyes, the Looking-glass of all Creatures. Let us consider how the Birds flye, the Fishes

fiſhes ſwim, the worms creep, the Heavens turn, the Elements move, the Sea ebbeth and floweth unceſſantly: yea, the earth it ſelf, which is the moſt heavy and unweildy creature of all other, yet never ceaſeth his working, bringeth forth his burden in Summer, and labour inwardly all the Winter, in concocting and digeſting his nouriſhment for the next ſpring. Thus we ſee how all Creatures are diligently and painfully exerciſed in their kinds. And therefore it is a great ſhame for us to live idlely, careleſly, and diſſolutely. Let us therefore learn once (at laſt) to fly ſloth, and every one to live faithfully, diligently, and induſtriouſly, in our ſeveral callings. So ſhall we both keep Satan at the ſtaves end, and alſo much ſin out of our ſouls, which otherwiſe idleneſs will force in upon us.

Phil. *I muſt needs confeſs that idleneſs is a groſs vice in whomſoever it is found. But eſpecially, in my judgment, it is moſt odious in Magiſtrates and Miniſters.*

Theol. That is ſo in truth. For they ought to be the guides, governours, Shepheards, and watch-men over the people of God. And therefore for them to neglect their duties and charges, is a moſt horrible thing, ſith it concerneth the hurt of many. Therefore well ſaid the Heathen Poet. [Hom. l. 2.] *A Magiſtrate or Miniſter may not be lazy or ſloathfull, to whom the nurſing of the people is given in charge, and of whom many things are to be cared for.*

What a lamentable thing therefore is it, when Magiſtrates are prophane, irreligious, popiſh, vicious and negligent in the duties of their calling? And how much more lamentable is it, when Miniſters neglect their ſtudies, ſlack preaching, and prayer, and give up themſelves, ſome to covetouſneſs, ſome to pride, ſome to husbandry, ſome to other wordly affairs, and ſome to ſpend their time idlely in Taverns, Ale-houſes, gaming, rioting, and lewd company? Would to God therefore that both theſe kinds of publick perſons would caſt of idleneſs, and ſloth, and with diligence, faithfulneſs, care and conſcience perform the duties of their places. For it is an excellent thing for

any

any to be a good man in his place: As a good Magistrate that ruleth well, that governeth wisely, which favoureth good men, and good causes: and defendeth them: which also setteth himself against bad men and causes, and punisheth them sharply and severely: which moreover maintaineth vertue, even of a very love he beareth unto it in his heart: and punisheth vice, of a very zeal and hatred against it: and not for his credit only, or to please some, or because he must needs do it, and can do no less, or for any such sinister respect; but even of a love to God, a care of his Glory, a conscience of duty, and a fervent zeal against sin. So likewise it is a notable thing for a Minister to be a good man in his place, to be studious in the Law of God, a diligent and painful in preaching; and that out of a love to God, a zeal of his Glory, deep pity and compassion toward the souls of the people, seeking by all means possible to win them unto God; carrying himself in all his actions amongst them, wisely, religiously, unblamably, and inoffensively. So again, it is a worthy thing to be a good rich man, which doth much good with his riches, which keepeth a good house, relieveth the poor, ministreth to the necessities of the Saints, and giveth chearfully and with discretion, where need is. So also it is a commendable thing to be a good neighbour, a good townsman, by whom a man may live quietly, peaceably, joyfully and comfortably.

And lastly, to be a good poor man: that is humble, lowly, dutiful, painful, ready to help, and ready to please. Oh, I say, this is a most excellent and glorious thing, when every man keepeth his standing, his range, and his rank; when all men, with care, and conscience, perform the duties of their places: when the Husband doth the duty of an Husband, and the wife of a wife: when the Father doth the duty of a Father; and the child of a child: when the master doth the duty of a master; and the servant of a servant: when every man setteth God before his eyes, in doing those things which especially belong unto him. For herein consisteth the honour of God,

the

the glory of the Prince, the Crown of the Church, the Fortreſs of the Common-wealth, the ſafety of Cities, the ſtrength of Kingdoms, and the very preſervation of all things.

Aſun. *You have ſaid well in ſome things: but yet I do not ſee, but that rich men and women may live idlely, ſith they have enough wherewithal to maintain it. For may not a man do with his own what he liſt?*

Theol. No verily. For you may not take your own knife, and cut your own throat with it: neither may you take your own Ax, and kill your own child with it. Therefore that reaſon is naught. Albeit therefore wealthy men and women have great plenty of all things, ſo as they need not labour, yet let them be profitably employed ſome way or other: let them exerciſe themſelves in one good thing or other. If they can find nothing to do, let them give themſelves much to private prayers, and reading of the Scriptures, that they may be able to inſtruct and exhort others. Or elſe let Ladies and Gentlewomen do as that good woman *Dorcas* did, that is, buy cloath, cut it out, work it, ſew it, make ſhirts, ſmocks, coats, and garments, and give them to the poor, when they have ſo done. For it is ſaid of *Dorcas*, that *ſhe was a woman full of good works, and almſ-deeds which ſhe did.* (*Act.* 9. 36.) She was a merciful and tender-hearted woman, ſhe was the poor man's friend, ſhe cloathed the poor and naked, ſhe knew it was a ſacrifice acceptable to God. Oh that the wealthy women of our Land, would follow the example of *Dorcas*! But (alas) theſe dayes bring forth few *Dorcaſes*.

Phil. *As you have ſhewed us the cauſes of the former evils: ſo now, I pray you, ſhew the cauſes of this alſo.*

Theol. The cauſes of idleneſs are,

Evil Examples.
Bad education:
Living out of a calling.

Phil. *Shew us alſo the remidies.*

Theol.

Theol. The remedies are,

Good Education.	Good examples.
Labour in youth.	Diligence in a lawful calling.

Phil. *Now then let us come to the laſt ſign of damnation, which is oppreſſion. And I beſeech you, good Sir, ſpeak your mind of it out of the Scriptures.*

Theol. It is ſo infinite a matter, that I know not where to begin, or where to make an end of it. It is a bottomleſs ſink of moſt grievous enormities. I ſhall enter into a Labyrinth, where I ſhall not know how to get out again. But ſith you are deſirous to hear ſomthing of it, this I ſay, That it is a moſt cruel monſter, a bloody vice, a moſt ugly and hideous feind of Hell. The Scriptures in very many places do cry out upon it, arraigning it, adjudging it, and condemning it down to Hell. They do alſo thunder and lighten upon all thoſe which are ſtained and corrupted with this vice, calling them by ſuch names, and giving them ſuch titles, as are taken off from the effects of this ſin, and moſt fit for oppreſſours: as namely, that *They grind the faces of the poor*; (*Iſa.* 3. 15.) that, *They pluck off their skins for them, and their fleſh from their bones*: (*Mic.* 3. 2.) that, *They eat them up as they eat bread.* (*Pſal.* 14. 4.) Thoſe are they which ſtrive to devour all, (like ſavage beaſts) and to get the whole Earth into their hands either by hook or by crook, by right or by wrong; by oppreſſion fraud and violence: theſe Caterpillers and Cormorants of the earth are like unto the Whale-fiſh, that ſwalloweth up quick other little fiſhes: they are like a Lyon, that devoureth other beaſts: they are like the Falcon, which ſeizeth, plumeth, and preyeth upon other fowls: theſe greedy wolves devour all, and ſwallow up the poor of the Land: therefore the Prophets of God do thunder out many great woes againſt them.

Firſt, The Prophet *Eſay* ſaith, chap. 5. 8. *Wo unto them that joyn houſe to houſe, and field to field, till there be no place for the poor to dwell in, that they may be placed by themſelves in the midſt of the Earth.*

Secondly, The Prophet *Jeremy* ſaith, *Wo unto him that*

that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers without equity. (*Jer.* 22. 13.)

Thirdly, The Prophet *Micah* saith, *Wo unto them that covet fields, and take them by violence; and so oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.* (*Mic.* 2. 2.)

Fourthly, The Prophet *Habakkuk* cryeth out, saying, *Wo unto him that buildeth a Town with blood, and erecteth a City by iniquity.* (*Hab.* 2. 12.) Saint *James* also most terribly threatneth these kind of men, saying, *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your Gold and Silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire,* (*Jam.* 5. 1, 3.)

Lastly, S. *Paul* saith flatly, that *Extortioners shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* (1 *Cor.* 6. 10.) Thus we see, how many fearful woes and threats are denounced from Heaven against the pestilent cut-throats of the earth.

Phil. *And all little enough. For they are steeped in their sin, and the stain of it is soked into them, as it will hardly ever be washed out. True it is that you said, that these cruel oppressing blood-suckers are the most pernitious and pestilent vermine that creep upon the face of the earth; and yet I think there were never more of them than in these daies. For now the wicked world is full of such as do sundry waies bite, pinch, and nip the poor, as we see by every days lamentable experience. But you can speak more of it than I: therefore I pray you lay open the sundry kinds of oppression used in these days.*

Theol. There is oppression by usury: Oppression by bribery: Oppression by racking of Rents: Oppression by taking excessive Fines: Oppression in bargaining: Oppression in letting of Leases: Oppression in letting of houses. Oppression in letting of grounds. Oppression in binding poor men to unreasonable Covenants. Oppression in thrusting poor men out of their houses: Oppression in hiring poor mens houses over their heads. Oppression in taking of Fees.

Oppreſſion by Lawyers. Oppreſſion by Church-Officers. Oppreſſion by engroſſers. Oppreſſion by foreſtallers. Oppreſſion of the Church. Oppreſſion of the Miniſtry. Oppreſſion of the poor. Oppreſſion of Widows. Oppreſſion of Orphans.

And thus we ſee how all ſwarm with Oppreſſions; and nothing but Oppreſſions, Oppreſſions.

Phil. *In truth, this is a moſt cruel and oppreſſing age wherein we live; yea, a very Iron age. It ſeems that the great ones mind nothing elſe: they are altogether ſet upon oppreſſion; they dote and dream of it, they find ſweet in it, and therefore they are mad of it: As* Solomon *ſaith, Oppreſſion maketh a wiſe man mad. It ſeems therefore, that this vice is of ſuch marvellous force, that it can bereave men of their wits, and make them ſtark mad of getting goods by hook or by crook, they care not how, nor from whom, ſo they have it. Yet no doubt the moſt wiſe God hath inacted many good Laws, for the ſuppreſſing of this evil, and threatneth the execution of them in his own perſon, and eſpecially his Law doth provide for the ſafety of the poor, the fatherleſs, the widow, and the ſtranger. But you, Maſter* Theologus, *can repeat the Statutes better than I, becauſe you are a profeſſed Divine: therefore I pray you, let us hear them from you.*

Theol. In the 22 Chapter of *Exodus*, God made this Law following: *You ſhall not trouble any widow or fatherleſs child: If thou vex or trouble ſuch, and ſo he call and cry unto me, I will ſurely hear his cry. Then ſhall my wrath be kindled, and I will kill you with the ſword: and your Wives ſhall be widows, and your children fatherleſs.*

Again he ſaith, *Thou ſhalt not oppreſs an hired ſervant that is needy and poor: but thou ſhalt give him his hire for his day; neither ſhall the Sun go down upon it (for he is poor, and therewith ſuſtaineth his life) leſt he cry againſt thee unto the Lord, and it be ſin unto thee,* (Deut. 24. 14, 15.)

Moreover the Lord ſaith, *Thou ſhalt do no injury to a ſtranger; for ye were ſtrangers in the Land of Egypt.* Exod. 22. 21. And GOD *Mal.* 3. 5. himſelf threatneth,

That

That he will be a ſwift witneſs againſt thoſe which keep back the Hirelings Wages, and vex the widow and the fatherleſſe. The Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 6. *Let no man oppreſs or defraud his brother in any matter. For the Lord is an avenger of all ſuch things.* *Solomon* alſo ſaith, (*Eccleſ.* 5.8.) *If in a Country thou ſeeſt the oppreſſion of the poor, and the defrauding of juſtice and judgement; be not aſtonied at the matter: for he that is higher than the higheſt regardeth, and there be higher than they.* All theſe holy Statutes and Laws, enacted and provided againſt oppreſſors, do plainly ſhew what care the Lord hath for his poor diſtreſſed and deſolate people.

Phil. *But theſe oppreſſing hell-hounds, are ſuch as care for nothing. No Law of the Almighty can bridle them; nothing can fear them; nothing can reſtrain them; they have made a covenant with hell and death. They are frozen in their dregs, they are paſt feeling.* And as Job ſaith, (*Job* 24.13.) *Theſe are they that abhor the light; they know not the wayes thereof, neither continue in the paths thereof. Their hearts are as hard as the Adamant. Nothing can move them, nothing can work upon them. There is great crying out every where of the ſtone in the reins, which indeed is a great torment to the body. But there is no complaining of the ſtone in the heart which is the ſoreſt diſeaſe that poſſibly can fall into the ſoul of man; and yet in theſe times it groweth very rife. For mens hearts are as hard as braſs, and as the nether Mil-ſtone, as the Scripture ſpeaketh. For many, eſpecially of theſe unmerciful and oppreſſing Tyrants, ſay in their hearts, God will will do neither good nor evil,* (Amos 6. 3.) *Therefore they put the evil day far from them, and approach to the ſeat of iniquity. They are at eaſe in* Sion; *they lye upon beds of Ivory, and ſtretch themſelves on their beds, and eat the Lambs of the flock, and the Calves out of the ſtall,* (Amos 6.5,6.) *They ſing to the ſound of the Viol; they invent inſtruments of muſick, like* David; *they drink wine in bowls, and no man is ſorry for the afflictions of* Joſeph: *that is, the troubles of God's people. The Prophet* Eſay *alſo complains of theſe kind of men, ſaying, They regard not the work of the Lord, nither conſider the work of his hands.* (Iſa. 5.12.)

And another Prophet ſaith, They ſay in their hearts, God hath forgot, he hides away his face, and will never ſee. They are ſo proud, that they ſeek not for God. They think always there is no God: his judgments are far out of their ſight, their waies alway proſper, and therefore they ſay in their hearts, Tuſh, we ſhall never be moved, nor come in danger, Pſal. 10. 11.

Theol. You have ſpoken very well touching the ſteelineſs and hardneſs of theſe mens hearts, who are ſo unmerciful to their poor neighbours, that almoſt none can live by them. They do ſo diſturb and diſquiet all things, that poor men can dwell in no reſt by them. Therefore truly ſaith the wiſe King. *A mighty man moleſteth all, and both hireth the fool, and hires thoſe that paſs by: but the poor man ſpeaketh with prayers;* That is, by the way of entreaty and ſupplications. For the poor are afraid of them: they quake when they ſee them, as the beaſts quake at the roaring of a Lyon. Many poor Farmers, poor Husbandmen, poor Herds, poor Labourers, poor Widows and Hirelings, do quake and tremble when theſe greedy wolves come abroad. And, (as *Job* ſaith) *The poor of the earth hide themſelves together.* (*Job.* 24. 4.) For (alas! in their hearts they cannot abide the ſight of them) they had as leeve meet the Devil as meet them, for fear of one diſpleaſure or another. For either they fear that they will warn them out of their houſes, or parley about more rent, and ſtraiten covenants, or beg away their beſt kine, or borrow their horſes, or command their Carts, or require a weeks work of them, and never pay them for it, or a twelve-Months paſture for a couple of Geldings, or that they'l make one quarrel or another unto them, one miſchief, or another. So that theſe poor ſouls cannot tell what to do, or which way to turn them, for fear of theſe cruel Termagants. They are even weary of their lives. For they have no remedy for theſe things, but even to bear it off with head and ſhoulders: therefore they often wiſh they were out of the world, and that they were buryed quick. They ſay, if any will knock

knock them on the head, they will forgive him. O most pitious case! O lamentable hearing! These poor silly Creatures are fain to drudge and moil all the year long, in Winter and Summer, in Frost and Snow, in heat and cold, to provide their Rents, that they may be able to pay their cruel Landlord at his day. For else how shall they be able to look him in the face? Yet their rent is so rack't, that all they can do is little enough to pay it; and when that is paid, (alas!) the poor man and his wife, and children have little left to take to, or to maintain themselves withal; they are fain to gnaw of a crust, to fare hardly, and go thinly clad. Sometimes they have victuals, sometimes none. The poor children cry for bread, poor widows also, and poor fatherles children, are found weeping and mourning in their houses, and in their streets. So that now we may with *Solomon*, *Turn and consider all the oppressions that are wrought under the Sun.* (*Eccl*,4.1.) We may behold the tears of the oppressed, and none comforteth them. For the mighty ones do wrong the weaker, even as the stronger beasts do push and harm the feebler. These griping Oppressours do pinch the poor even to the quick. They pluck away from the fatherless and widows that little which they have. If there be but a Cow, or a few sheep left, they will have them. If there be a little commodity of House or Land, Oh what devices they have to win it in, and to wring it away! These Tyrants will go as nigh as the bed they lye upon. They know well enough, the poor men are not able to wage law with them; and therefore they may do what wrong they will, and shew what cruelty they list. Hence come the tears of the oppressed; hence cometh the weeping and wailing of the poor. But alas, poor souls! they may well weep to ease their hearts a little; but there is none to comfort them: remedy they can have none. But yet assuredly, the everlasting God doth look upon them, and will be revenged. For the cryes of the poor, the fatherless, and the widows, have entred into the ears of the Lord of Hosts, who

is an avenger of all ſuch things; yea, a ſtrong Revenger as *Solomon* ſaith, (*Prov.* 23. 14.) *Enter not into the field of the fatherleſs, for the Revenger is ſtrong; he himſelf will plead their cauſe againſt thee.* And again he ſaith, (*Prov.* 22. 22.) *Rob not the poor, becauſe he is poor; neither tread down the afflicted in the Gate: for the Lord pleadeth their cauſe, and will ſpoil their ſoul that ſpoil them.* We ſee then, that the moſt juſt God will be revenged of theſe unmerciful Tyrants. He will not alwaies put up theſe wrongs and injuries done to the poor.

In the eighth Chapter of the Prophet *Amos*, *he ſwears by the excellency of* Jacob, *that he will never forget any of their works.* And again he ſaith by his Prophet *Jeremy*, *Shall I not be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this?*

Surely he will ſet his face againſt them, to root them out of the earth. For indeed they are not worthy to crawl upon the face of the earth, or to draw breath among the Sons of men. It is written in the book of Pſalms, that God would ſet theſe fellows, oppoſite againſt him, as a Butt to ſhoot at: that *he will put them apart, and the ſtrings of his Bow ſhall he make ready againſt their faces*, (*Pſal.* 21. 12.) Be aſtoniſhed at this, O ye heavens; and tremble, O thou earth. Hear this, O ye cruel Land-Lords, unmerciful Oppreſſors, and Blood-ſuckers of the earth. You may well be called Blood-ſuckers: For you ſuck the blood of many poor men, women, and children; you eat it, you drink it, you have it ſerved in at your ſumptuous tables every day, you ſwallow it up, and live by it. And as Job ſaith, *The wilderneſs gives you and your children food*, *Job* 24. 5. that is, you live by robbing and murdering. But wo, wo unto you that ever you were born. For the blood of the oppreſſed, which ye have eaten and drunken, ſhall one day cry for ſpeedy vengeance againſt you, as the blood of *Abel* cryed againſt *Cain*. Their blood ſhall witneſs againſt you in the day of judgement; and the tears of many poor ſtarv'd children, orphants and widows, ſhall cry out againſt you. Was the Lord revenged of *Ahab* for his cruel and unjuſt dealing

dealing with poor *Naboth*, and ſhall he not be revenged of you? Did dogs lap the blood of *Ahab*, and ſhall you eſcape, (1 *King.* 21.) No, no; you ſhall not eſcape. The Lord will be a ſwift witneſs againſt you, as he ſaith in *Malachy*, (*Mal.* 3. 5) Was the Lord angry with the rich of the people for oppreſſing the poor, (ſo as the cry of the people, and of their wives, againſt their oppreſſors, was heard of the Almighty, *Neh.* 5.) and do you think you ſhall eſcape ſcot-free? Doth not the like cauſe bring forth the like effect? the like ſin, the like puniſhment? Know therefore for certainty, that the Lord hath coffers full of vengeance againſt you, and one day he will unlock them, and bring them forth in the ſight of all men.

Know alſo that the timber of your houſes, and the ſtones of your walls, which you have built by oppreſſion and blood, ſhall cry againſt you in the day of the Lords wrath, as the Prophet *Habakkuk* telleth you, *Hab.* 2. 11. *The ſtone* (ſaith he) *ſhall cry out of the wall; and the beam out of the timber ſhall anſwer.* Where the Prophet telleth you, that the walls of your houſes built in blood, ſhall cry out loud and ſhrill, and play the Choriſters in that behalf, ſo as they ſhall anſwer one another on either ſide, The one ſingeth behold blood; the other, Behold Murder. The one ſide, Behold deceit; the other, Behold cruelty. The one, Behold pilling and polling; the other, Behold coveteouſneſs. The one, Behold robbery; the other, Behold perjury. And thus you ſee how the ſtones and timber of your houſes ſhall deſcant upon you. And howſoever you put on you brazen brows, and harden your hearts againſt theſe threatnings of the moſt terrible God and Lord of hoſts, yet one day you ſhall (in ſpite of your hearts, will ye, nill ye) be brought forth into judgement; you ſhall once come to your reckoning; you ſhall at laſt be apprehended, convicted, and arraigned at the Bar of Gods Tribunal Seat, before the great Judge of all the world. Then ſentence ſhall paſs againſt you, even that moſt dreadful ſentence, (*Mat.* 25. 41.) *Go ye curſed into hell fire, there to be tormented*

with the devil and his angels for ever. O then, wo, wo unto you; *For what ſhall it profit a man to win the whole world, and looſe his own ſoul?* ſaith our Lord Jeſus. Surely, even as much, as if one ſhould win a farthing, and loſe an hundred thouſand pounds. For if he ſhall be caſt into hell fire which hath not given his own goods righteouſly gotten, as our Saviour avoucheth; where then ſhall he be caſt, that hath ſtollen other mens goods? And if he ſhall be damned that hath not cloathed the naked, what ſhall become of him that hath made naked them that were cloathed? Oh, therefore repent in time, O ye cruel Oppreſſours, ſeek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while is near, lay aſide your ſavage cruelty; viſit the fatherleſs and widow in their diſtreſs; deal your bread to the hungry; help them to their right which ſuffer wrong; deal mercifully with your Tenants; rack not your rents any more, pinch not the poor ſouls, for whom Chriſt dyed; pity them, I ſay, but pinch them not; deal kindly and friendly with them; remember your great accounts; conſider the ſhortneſs of your dayes, and the vanity of your life: rent your hearts and not your clothes: turn unto the LORD with all your heart, with weeping, wailing, and mourning; prevent GODS wrath with a ſacrifice of tears; pacifie his anger with the calves of your lips, and with a contrite ſpirit; Be grieved for that which is paſt, and amend that which is to come; ſtand it out no more at the ſwords point againſt God; for it will not boot you to ſtrive; he is too ſtrong for you. Your onely wiſdom is to come in. Come in therefore, come in, ye rebellious generation; ſubmit your ſelves to the great King; humble your ſelves under his mighty hand; caſt down your ſwords and targets: yield unto our God. So ſhall you eſcape the vengeance to come: ſo ſhall God accept you, have mercy upon you, receive you to favour, grant you a general pardon for all your rebellions, and admit you into the the number of his faithfull and loyal ſubjects.

Phil. *I conceive by divers ſpeeches which you have alledged*

ledged, that goods got by oppreſſion and cruelty, will never proſper long. For oppreſſors coin their money upon their neighbours ſkins, how then can it be bleſſed?

Theol. You have ſpoken a truth. For, as it hath been ſhewed before, that thoſe goods which are got by ſwearing and lying, are curſed; ſo all thoſe that are got by oppreſſion and violence are more curſed, Therefore the Lord ſaith by his Prophet *Jeremy*, *As the Partridge gathe young which ſhe hath not brought forth; ſo he that gathers their riches, and not by right, ſhall leave them in the midſt of his dayes; and at his end, ſhall be a fool, and his name ſhall be written in the earth,* Jer. 17. 11.

Phil. *Would to God our Magiſtrates and Governours would take ſpeedy order for remedying theſe things, and for the redreſſing of ſuch grievous enormities as are amongſt us; or that they themſelves would ſtep in and deliver the oppreſſed from the hand of the oppreſſour.*

Theol. Job was an excellent man for ſuch matters. For it is ſaid of him, that *He brake the jaws of the unrighteous man, and pluckt the prey out of his teeth.* (*Job.* 29. 17.) Where we ſee how *Job* was a means to deliver the innocent, and to pull the Lamb out of the Lyons claws. Moreover, it is written of him in the ſame Chapter, that the bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh, came upon him, and that he cauſed the Widows heart to rejoyce; (*Job* 29. 13.) that he was the eye to the blind, the feet to the lame, and the father to the poor: and when he knew not the cauſe, he ſought it out diligently. O what a notable man was this! O that we had many *Jobs* in theſe days! Wiſe *Solomon* doth moſt gravely adviſe us all to follow *Job*'s example in this behalf. *Deliver* (ſaith he) *them that are oppreſſed, and drawn to death: for ſhouldſt thou withdraw thy ſelf from them which go down to the ſlaughter* (*Prov.* 24. 12.) Would to God this counſel were well weighed and practiſed among us.

Phil. *I marvel much with what face theſe cruel oppreſſours, can come before God in his holy Temple to pray, and offer up their ſacrifices unto him. For we ſee, many of them, though they have ſuch foul hands, and foul hearts,*

as we have heard; yet for all that, will moſt impudently preſume to come to the Church and pray: or at leaſt, when they are laid in their beds at nights, and half aſleep, then will they mumble over their prayers, or be pattering ſome Pater-noſters.

Theol. Alas, alas, poor Souls! all that they do in matters of God's worſhip, is but Hypocriſie and diſſimulation. For in truth they are not for God, they love him but from the teeth outward: their mouths are with him, but their heart goes after covetouſneſs, and their hands are full of blood. And therefore God doth both abhor them and their prayers. For, ſaith he, *Though they ſtretcht out their hands, yet will I I hide mine eyes from them: and though they make many prayers, yet will I not hear them. For their hands are full of blood.* (*Iſa.* 1. 15.)

Moreover, the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *He that turns away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer is abominable.* (*Prov.* 28. 9.) *David* ſaith, *If I regard wickedneſs in my heart, God will not hear my prayer.* (*Pſal.* 66. 18.) Our Lord Jeſus alſo affirmeth, that *God hears not ſinners:* (*John.* 9. 31.) that is, ſtubborn, and careleſs ſinners. So then, we may clearly ſee (by all theſe teſtimonies of holy Writ) what account God makes of the Prayers of oppreſſours, and all prophane and ungodly men: namely, that he doth hate them, and abhor them as loathſome and odious in his ſight.

Phil. *Now in concluſion, ſhew us the cauſes of oppreſſion.*

Theol. The cauſes are theſe.

Cruelty.	An evil Conſcience.
Covetouſneſs.	
Hard-heartedneſs.	The Devil.

Phil. *Let us hear alſo the remedies.*

Theol. The remedies be theſe.

Pity.	A good Conſcience.
Contentation.	
Tender affections.	Much Prayer.

Phil. *Now, Sir, you have at large uttered your mind concerning theſe groſs corruptions of the world, and have plainly and evidently proved them to be the deadly poyſon of the*

the ſoul: ſo alſo, I pray you, ſatisfie us in this, whether they be not hurtful alſo to the body, goods, and name.

Theol. I have dwelt the longer in theſe common vices of the world, becauſe almoſt all ſorts of men are ſtained with one or other of them: and therefore they can never be enough ſpoken againſt. For the whole world lyeth in them, as S. *John* teſtifieth. (1 *Joh.* 5. 19.) If men therefore could be recovered of theſe diſeaſes, no doubt there would be a ready paſſage made for the abundance of grace; and we ſhould have a moſt flouriſhing Church and Common-wealth: but as long as theſe do lie in the way, there is ſmall hope of greater mercies and bleſſings to be poured upon us; or that ever we ſhall come to have an inward Converſation with God For theſe vices blind our eyes, burthen our hearts, and (as the prophet *Jeremy* ſaith, *Jer.* 5. 25.) *hinder good things from us.* But touching your Petition: I muſt needs grant, That as theſe vices are the very bane of the Soul, and moſt certain ſigns of condemnation: ſo are they very dangerous to the Body, Goods and Name; yea, and to the whole Land, both Church and Common-wealth.

Phil. *Shew us out of the Scriptures what danger they bring to the body.*

Theol. The Lord our God, ſaith, That if we will not obey him, nor keep his Commandments, (but break his covenant) he will appoint over us haſty plagues, conſumptions, and the burning Ague, to conſume the eyes, and to make the heart heavy (*Lev* 26. 16.) So alſo he ſaith, that if we will not obey his voice, to obſerve all his Commandments and Ordinances, that then he will make the Peſtilence cleave unto us, until he have conſumed us: (*Deut.* 28. 21.) that he will ſmite us with the fever, with the botch of *Egypt*, with the emrods with the Scab, and with the Itch, that alſo he will ſmite us with madneſs, and with blindneſs and with aſtoniſhment of heart. So then you ſee what great evils the Lord threatens to inflict upon our bodies in this life, for theſe and ſuch like ſins. But on the contrary, the Holy Ghoſt ſaith,

(*Prov.*

(*Prov.* 3. 7, 8.) *Fear God, and depart from evil: ſo health ſhall be to thy navel, and moiſture to thy bones.*

Phil. *What evil do theſe forenamed ſins bring upon us in our goods and outward eſtate?*

Theol. They cauſe God to curſe us in all that we ſet hand unto, as plentifully appeareth in the fore-named Chapter: where the Lord ſaith thus: *If thou wilt not obey the commandments of the Lord thy God, curſed ſhalt thou be in the town, curſed alſo in the Field, curſed ſhall be thy basket and thy ſtore; curſed ſhall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy Land, and the encreaſe of thy kine, and the flocks of thy ſheep. Curſed ſhalt thou be when thou comeſt in, and curſed alſo when thou goeſt out. The Lord ſhall ſend upon thee curſing, trouble, and ſhame, in all that thou ſetteſt thy hand unto.* (*Deut.* 28. 17.) And further he ſaith, *That he will break the ſtaff of their bread; that ten women ſhall bake their bread in one oven, and they ſhall deliver their bread again by weight, and they ſhall eat, and not be ſatisfied.* (*Levit.* 26. 26.) You do therefore apparently ſee, that theſe ſins will draw down God's Wrath upon us, and all that we have.

Phil. *What hurt do theſe ſins to our good name?*

Theol. They bring reproach, ſhame and infamy upon us, and cauſe us to be abhorred and contemned of all good men. They do utterly blot out our good name. For as vertue makes men honourable and reverend, ſo vice makes men vile and contemptible. This is ſet down where the Lord threatens *Iſrael*, that for their ſins and diſobedience, he will make them a Proverb and common talk; yea, a reproach and aſtoniſhment among all people. (1 *King.* 9. 7.) In ſundry other places of the Prophets he threatens, for their ſins, to make them a reproach, a ſhame, an hiſſing, and a nodding of the head to all Nations. (*Ezek.* 5. 15.)

Phil. *I do verily thus think, that as ſin generally doth ſtain every mans good name, which all are chary and tender of: ſo eſpecially it doth blot thoſe which are in high places, and of ſpecial note for learning, wiſdom, and godlineſs.*

Theol.

Theol. You have ſpoken moſt truly, and agreeable to the Scriptures. For the Scripture ſaith, *As a dead flie cauſeth the Apothecaries ointment to ſtink: ſo doth a little folly him that is in eſtimation for wiſdom, and for honour.* (*Eccleſ.* 10. 1.) Where *Solomon* ſaith, That if a flie get into the Apothecaries box of Ointment, and dye, and putrifie in it, ſhe marreth, though it be never ſo precious: even ſo, if a little ſin get into the heart, and break out into the forehead of a man of great fame, for ſome ſingular gifts, it will blur him, though he be never ſo excellent.

Phil. *Shew me this I pray you more plainly.*

Theol. We obſerve this, in all experience, that if a noble man be a good man, and have many excellent parts in him of courteſie, patience, humility, and love of Religion; yet if he be covetous, the common people will have their eye altogether upon that man, and they will ſay, ſuch a man is a very good man, but for one thing he is exceeding covetous, oppreſſeth poor men, and dealeth hardly with his Tenants, keepeth no houſe, doth little good in the Country where he dwelleth. And this is it that marreth all.

Moreover, let a Judge, a Juſtice, or a Magiſtrate, be endued with excellent gifts of prudence, policy, temperance, liberality, and knowledge in the Law: yet if they be given to anger, or taking of bribes, Oh how it will diſgrace them amongſt the people! for they will ſay, He is a worthy man indeed, but there is one thing in him, that marreth all: he is an exceeding angry and furious man, he is as angry as a waſp, he will be in a pelting chafe for every trifle: he will fret and fume if you do but blow upon him. And beſides this, he is a very corrupt man: he is a great taker of bribes: he loveth well to be bribed: he will do any thing for bribes.

Furthermore, if any Preacher be a man of great gifts, the Common people will ſay of him: Oh he is a worthy man indeed, an excellent Scholar, a profound Divine, a ſingular man in a Pulpit: but yet for all that, he hath a ſhrewd touch which marreth all; he

he is an exceeding proud man: he is as proud as *Lucifer*. He hath very great gifts indeed, but I warrant you he knoweth it well enough. For he carryeth his creſt very high, and looketh very ſternly and diſdainfully upon all other men, He is unmeaſurable puſt up with over weening, and thinketh he toucheth the clouds with his head. Thus therefore we ſee, how the dead flies mar all, and how ſome ſin doth diſgrace a man that otherwiſe doth excel.

Phil. *what is the cauſe why ſome one ſin doth ſo blot and ſmut the moſt excellent men?*

Theol. The reaſon hereof is, becauſe ſuch men are as a candle ſet on a candleſtick, or rather upon a ſcaffold or mountain, for all men to behold and look upon. And ſure it is, they have a thouſand eyes upon them every day; and that not only gazing on them, but alſo prying very narrowly into them to ſpy out the leaſt mote; that they may make a mountain of it. For, as in a clean white paper one little ſpot is ſoon eſpied but in a piece of brown paper, twenty great blurs ſcant diſcerned: Even ſo in Noble-men, Judges, Magiſtrates, Juſtices, Preachers and Profeſſors, the leaſt ſpot or ſpeck is ſoon ſeen into; but among the baſer ſort, and moſt groſs livers, almoſt nothing is eſpyed or regarded.

Phil. *Sith the eyes of all men are bent and fixed upon ſuch men as are of ſome note, therefore they had need very heedfully to look to their ſteps, that they may take away all advantage from them that ſeek it.*

Theol. Yes verily: and furthermore, they had need to pray with *David* always *Direct my ſteps O Lord in thy word; and let no iniquity have dominion over me. Pſa.* 119. 133. And again, *Order my goings, that my footſteps ſlip not: uphold me in my integrity. Pſa.* 41. 12. For if ſuch men be never ſo little given to ſwearing, to lying, to drink, or to women, it is eſpyed by and by: and therewithal their credit is cracked, their fame overcaſt, their glory eclipſed, and the date of their good name expired.

Phil.

Phil. *Now as you have ſhewed what great hurt theſe ſins do bring upon our ſouls, bodies, goods or name: ſo alſo, I pray you, ſhew what danger they bring upon the whole Land.*

Theol. Queſtionleſs, they pull down the wrath of God upon us all, and give him juſt cauſe to break all in pieces, and utterly to ſubvert and overthrow the good eſtate both of Church and Commonwealth; yea, to make a final conſumption and a deſolation of all. For they be the very fire-brands of Gods wrath, and, as it were touch-wood to kindle his anger and indignation upon us. For the Apoſtle ſaith, *For ſuch things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of diſobedience. Col.* 3. 6.

Phil. *Declare unto us out of the Scriptures, how the Lord in former times hath puniſhed whole Nations and Kingdoms for theſe and ſuch like ſins.*

Theol. In the fourth of *Hoſea*, the Lord telleth his people, that *he hath a controverſie with the Inhabitants of the Land,* (and the reaſon is added) *becauſe there was no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land. Hoſ.* 1. 4. *By ſwearing, lying, killing, ſtealing, and whoring, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore ſhall the Land mourn; and every one that dwelleth therein ſhall be cut off.*

Here then we ſee what it is that will incenſe God againſt us, and cauſe us all to mourn. So likewiſe the Lord threatneth by his Prophet *Amos*, that for the cruelty and oppreſſion of the poor, he would plague the whole Land. *Shall not the Land tremble, for this* (ſaith the Lord) *and every one mourn that dwels therein? Amos.* 8. 8.

Again the Lord ſaith by the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Do they provoke me to anger, and not themſelves to confuſion of their own faces? Jer.* 7. 19. 20. *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord, Behold, mine anger ſhall be poured upon this place, upon man and beaſt, upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it ſhall burn, and not be quenched.*

Again, the Lord ſaith, *If he will not hear theſe words, I ſwear by my ſelf, (ſaith the Lord) that this houſe ſhall be waſte,*

waſte, and I will prepare deſtroyers againſt thee, every one with his weapons, and they ſhall cut down thy cheif Cedar-trees, and caſt them into the fire. Jer. 22: 5.

Likewiſe the Lord threatneth by his Prophet *Ezekiel*, ſaying, *Becauſe you have not walked in my ſtatutes, nor kept my judgments: therefore, behold, I even I, come againſt thee, and will execute judgement in the midſt of thee, even in the ſight of the Nations; and I will do in thee that I never did before, neither will I do any more the like, becauſe of all thine abominations. For in the midſt of thee, the Fathers ſhall eat their Sons, and the Sons ſhall eat their Fathers. Ezek.* 5. 7. 8. Again, by the ſame Prophet the Lord ſaith, *Ezek.* 7. 23. to 27. *The Land is full of the judgement of blood, and the City full of cruelty. Wherefore I will bring the moſt wicked of the Heathen; and they ſhall poſſeſs their houſes. I will alſo make the pomp of the mighty to ceaſe and the holy place ſhall be defiled. When deſtruction cometh, they ſhall ſeek peace, and not have it. Calamity ſhall be upon calamity, rumor upon rumour. Then they ſhall ſeek a viſion of the Prophet: but the Law ſhall periſh from the Preiſt, and councel from the Ancient. The King ſhall mourn, and the Prince ſhall be cloathed with deſolation, and the hands of the people in the Land ſhall be troubled, I will do unto them according unto their waies, and according unto their judgement I will judge them: and they ſhall know that I am the Lord.* Laſt of all, the Lord ſaith by the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Hear O earth: Behold, I will cauſe a plauge to come upon this people, even the fruit of their own imaginations, becauſe they have not taken heed to my words and to my Laws, but caſt it off. Jer.* 6. 19. Almoſt innumerable places to the purpoſe, are to be found in the writings of the Prophets: but theſe may ſuffice to prove the main point, to wit, that the juſt God doth puniſh whole Nations and Kingdoms for the ſins and rebellions thereof.

Phil. Sith all theſe ſins (for the which the Lord did execute ſuch univerſal puniſhments upon his own people) did abound, and overflow the Land, may we not juſtly fear ſome great plauge to fall upon us? and the rather,

be-

becauſe our trangreſſions do increaſe dayly, and grow to a full height and ripeneſs; ſo as it ſeems, the harveſt of Gods Vengance draweth near, and approacheth?

Theol. Wee may indeed juſtly fear and tremble. For if God ſpared not the Angels that ſinned, how ſhall he ſpare us? If he ſpared not his own people, what can we look for? If he ſpared not the natural branches, how ſhall he ſpare us that are wilde by nature? are we better than they? Can we look to be ſpared, when they are puniſhed? are not our ſins as many and as great as theirs? Doth not the ſame cauſe bring forth the ſame effect? Is the Arm of the Lord ſhortned? Or is not God the ſame juſt God to puniſh ſin now that he was then? Yes, yes, aſſuredly. And therefore we have great cauſe to mourn and lament, to quake and tremble, becauſe there is a naked ſword of vengeance hanging over our heads. Thus did *Jeremy*, (*Jer.* 4. 19.) thus did *Amos*, (*Amos* 5. 16.) thus did *Habakkuk*, (*Hab.* 5. 16.) when they plainly ſaw the imminent wrath of God approaching upon the people of *Iſrael* and *Judah*.

Phil. *I think we may the rather doubt and fear, becauſe the puniſhment of theſe forenamed vices is neglected by the Magiſtrate. For commonly when they that bear the ſword of juſtice, do not draw it out to puniſh notorious offenders and malefactors, the Lord himſelf will take the matter into his own hands, and be revenged in his own perſon: which is moſt dreadful and dangerous. For it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*, *Heb.* 10. 31.

Theol. You have ſpoken a truth. For if thoſe which are Gods Deputies and Vicegerents in the earth, do their duties faithfully in puniſhing vice, and maintaining vertue; in ſmiting the wicked, and favouring the godly; then aſſuredly evil ſhall be taken out of *Iſrael*, Gods wrath prevented, and his judgements intercepted; as it is written, *Phineas ſtood up and executed judgement, and the plague was ſtayed*, (*Pſal.* 106. 30.) But if they (for fear, favour, affection, gain, flattery, bribery, or any other ſiniſter reſpect) will be two ſparing

ſing and remiſs in puniſhing groſs offenders, and be rather ready to ſmite the righteous, then do they exceedingly provoke Gods wrath againſt the Land, and againſt themſelves.

Phil. *One thing I do greatly lament; that there be either none at all, or very ſlender cenſures, either by the Civil or Eccleſiaſtical Authority, for divers of theſe fore-named vices; as pride, covetouſneſs, oppreſſion, lying, idleneſs ſwearing, &c.*

Theol. It is a thing to be lamented indeed. For where do we ſee a proud man puniſhed, a covetous man puniſhed, an oppreſſor puniſhed, a ſwearer puniſhed, a lyer puniſhed, an idle perſon puniſhed? Now, becauſe they know they cannot, or ſhall not be puniſhed, therefore they are altogether hardned, and imboldened in their ſins; as the wiſe man ſaith; *Becauſe ſentence againſt an evil work is not executed ſpeedily, therefore the hearts of the children of men are fully ſet in them to do evil.*

Phil. *One thing I do much muſe at, wherein alſo I deſire to be further ſatisfied,* viz. *what is the cauſe, that under ſo Godly a Prince, ſo many good laws, and ſo much good preaching and teaching, there ſhould notwithſtanding be ſuch an exceſs and overflowing of ſin in all Eſtates?*

Theol. The cauſes hereof are divers and manifold. But I will nominate four eſpecial ones in my judgment: The firſt is, mans natural corruption; which is ſo ſtrong, as almoſt nothing can bridle it. The ſecond is, ill preſidents, and external provocations to evil. The third is, the want of teaching in many congregations in the Land: by reaſon whereof, many know not ſin to be ſin. The laſt reaſon is, the corruption and negligence of ſome ſuch as are in authority.

Phil. *Doth not this inundation and overflowing of ſin, with the impunity of the ſame, prognoſticate great wrath againſt us.*

Theol. Yes undoubtedly, as it hath in part been ſhewed before. And there be divers other preſages of wrath, though not of the ſame kind, which be theſe. 1. Unthankfulneſs for the Goſpel. 2. The abuſe of

our

our long peace. 3. Our ſecret Idolatries. 4. Our general ſecurity. 5. Our ripeneſs in all ſin. 6. Our abuſe of Gods Mercy. 7. Our abuſe of his long patience. 8. The coldneſs of Profeſſors. 9. Our not profitting by former judgements: as peſtilence, famine, death, and the ſhaking of the ſword.

Phil. *This laſt I take to be a ſpecial token of approaching vengeance: that we have not profited by former warnings.*

Theol. True indeed. For it is an ordinary thing with God when men will not profit by milde corrections, and common puniſhments, then to lay greater upon them. And when a former trouble doth us no good, we are to fear a final conſuming trouble. For ſo we read in the prophecy of *Hoſea*, that at the firſt *God was to* Ephraim *as a moth, and to* Judah *as rottenneſs*, (*Hoſ.*5. 12.) but afterward, when as they profited not by it, he was to *Ephraim as a Lyon, and to Judah as a Lyons whelp.* So the Lord ſaith in another place, That if they will not come in and yield obedience at the firſt call of his wrath, then *he will puniſh them ſeven times more*, (*Lev.*26.18.) but if they continue in their ſtubbornneſs, then he treatneth bring *ſeven times more plagues upon them, according to their ſins*, (*Ver.* 21.) If by all theſe they would not be reformed, but walk ſtubbornly againſt him, then he threatneth, *Yet ſeven times more for their ſins*, (*ver.*24.) and the fourth time, *Yet ſeven times more.* The proof hereof we have in the the Book of the Judges; where we read how the people of *Iſrael* for their ſins were in ſubjection to the King of *Aram-Naharaim* eight years: *Judg.* 3. 8. afterward becauſe they profited nothing by it, but returned to their old ſins, therefore they ſerved *Eglon* King of *Moab* eighteen years, (*Judg.*3.14.) After that again, for their new ſins and provocations, the Lord gave them up into the hands of *Midian* ſeven years, *Judg.*6.1.

After all this, for the renewing of their ſins, the Lord ſold them into the hands of the *Philiſtines* and the

Amo-

Amonites, (*Judg.*10. 7, 8.) which did grievouſly vex and oppreſs them for the ſpace of eighteen years. Laſt of all, we read, that when neither famine nor peſtilence could cauſe them to return unto him, then he delivered them up to the Sword of their enemies, and held them in Bondage and Captivity threeſcore and ten years. After all this, when they were delivered out of Captivity, and returned home ſafely to their own Nation, and enjoyed ſome good time of peace and reſt, yet at laſt, they fell to the renewing of their ſins; and therefore the Lord plauged them moſt grievouſly by the divided *Greek* Empire, (*Ezek.*38.) even *Magog* and *Egypt*, *Seleuciæ* and *Lagidæ*, and that by the ſpace almoſt of three hundred years. And this is it that the Prophet *Hoſea* did fore-tell, (*Hoſ.*3.4.) that *the children of* Iſrael *ſhould remain many dayes without a King, and without a Prince; without an Offering, and without an Image, without an Ephod, and without a Teraphim.*

Phil. *You have very largely laid open this laſt token of vengeance; to wit, that God at the firſt doth but beat us upon the coat; but if we continue in ſin, he will whip us on the bare skin; and if men will not yeild at the firſt gentle ſtrokes, then he will ſtrike harder and harder, till he hath broken our ſtout ſtomacks, aud made our great hearts come down, Therefore it is good yeilding at the firſt; for we ſhall get nothing for our ſturdineſs againſt him. We do but cauſe him to double his ſtrokes and ſtrike us both ſidelong and over-thwart: for he cannot endure that we ſhould gruntle againſt him with ſtubborn ſullenneſs. But now to the point. Sith there are ſo many preſages and fore ſigns of Gods wrath, I pray you, ſhew what it is that ſtayeth execution, and very downfall of the ſame.*

Theol. The prayers and tears of the faithful, are the ſpecial means that ſtay the hand of God from ſtriking of us. For the prayers of the righteous are of great force with him; even able to do all things. St. *James* ſaith, That *the prayer of a righteous man availeth much, if it be fervent,* (*James* 5. 16.) and bringeth the example of *Elias* to prove it. For ſaith he, *Though Elias*

was

was a man ſubject to the like paſſions that we be, yet was he able by his prayers both to open and ſhut the Heavens. *Abraham* likewiſe prevailed ſo far with God by his prayers for *Sodom*, that if there had been but ten juſt men found in it, it had been ſpared, *Gen.* 18.32.

The Almighty God ſaith by his Prophet, *Though Moſes and Samuel ſtood before me, yet mine affections could not be toward this people.* (*Jer.* 15. 1.) Which doth plainly ſhew that *Moſes* and *Samuel* might have done much with him, had he not been ſo fully bent againſt his people for their ſins as he was. So likewiſe he ſaith in the Propheſie of *Ezekiel*, *Though theſe three men*, Noah, Daniel *and* Job, *were amongſt them, they ſhould deliver but their own ſouls by their righteouſneſs.* (Ezek. 14. 14.) Which alſo ſheweth, that if there had been any poſſible entreating him for the Land, theſe three men might have done it, but now he was reſolutely determined to the contrary. In reſpect therefore that the zealous Preachers, and true Profeſſors of the Goſpel, do ſo much prevail with God by their prayers, they are ſaid to be the defence and ſtrength of Kingdoms and Countries, of Churches and Commonwealths as it is ſaid of *Elijah*, that he was the chariot of *Iſrael* and the horſemen thereof; *Eliſha* alſo was environed with a mountain full of Horſes and Chariots of fire. (2 *King.* 2. 12.) And ſure it is, that *Elijah* and *Eliſha* are not only the Chariots and Horſemen of *Iſrael*, but alſo by their prayers they do cauſe God himſelf to be a wall of fire round about it. (2*King.* 6. 17.) as the Lord ſaith by his Prophet: *I ſought for a man among them, that ſhould make up the hedge, and ſtand in the gap before me for the Land, that I might not deſtroy it: but I found none.* (*Ezek.* 22. 30.) Which ſheweth, that if there had been but ſome few to have ſtood in the breach, he would have ſpared the whole Land. This alſo appeareth more plainly in the Propheſie of *Jeremy*, where the Lord ſaith thus: *Run to and fro by the ſtreets of Jeruſalem; behold and enquire in the open places thereof, if you can find a man, or if there be any that executeth judgment, and ſeeketh the truth,*

and

and I will ſpare it. (*Jer.* 5. 1.) Oh then mark and conſider, what a man may do: yea, what one man may do: what an *Abraham* may do: what a *Moſes* may do: what an *Eliah* may do: what a *Daniel*, what a *Samuel*, what a *Job*, what a *Noah* may do!

Some one man (by reaſon of his high favour with the Eternal) is able to do ſometimes more for a Land by his Prayers and Tears, than many prudent men by their counſel, or valiant men by their Swords. Yea, it doth evidently appear (in the ſacred Volume of the Holy Ghoſt) that ſome one poor Preacher, being full of the Spirit and Power of *Eliah*, doth more in his Study (either for offence, or defence: either for the turning away of wrath, or the procuring of Mercy) than a Camp-Royal, even forty thouſand ſtrong: yea, (as the Spirit ſpeaketh) *Though they all have their ſwords girded to their thighs, and be of the moſt valiant men of Iſrael.* (*Cant.* 3. 7.) And this is clearly proved in one verſe of the book of Pſalms, where the Prophet, having reckoned up the ſins of the people, addeth, *Therefore the Lord was minded to deſtroy them, had not Moſes* (*his choſen*) *ſtood in the breach, to turn away his wrath, leſt he ſhould deſtroy them.* (*Pſ.* 106. 23.) See therefore what one man may do with God, Some one man doth ſo bind the hands of God, that when he would ſtrike, he hath no power to do it: as it is ſaid of *Lot*, *I can do nothing till thou be come out.* See how the Lord ſaith, *He can do nothing*, (*Gen.* 19. 22.) becauſe he will do nothing: he doth wittingly and willingly, ſuffer his hands to be manacled, and bound behind him for ſome Jews ſake which he doth make more account of, than all the world beſides; ſo precious and dear are they in his ſight. Likewiſe it is written, That the Lord was exceedingly incenſed againſt the *Iſraelites* for their Idolatrous Calf which they made in *Horeb*; Yet he could do nothing, becauſe *Moſes* would not let him. And therefore he falleth to entreating of *Moſes*, that *Moſes* would let him alone, and entreat no more for them. *Oh* (ſaith the Lord to *Moſes*) *Let me alone that my*

wrath

wrath may wax hot againſt this people, and that I may conſume them. (*Exod.* 32. 10.) Thus we ſee that except *Let* go out of the City, and *Moſes* let him alone, he can do nothing. O the profoundneſs and altitude of God's mercy toward mankind! O the heighth and depth, length and breadth of his mercy toward ſome! O that the moſt glorious and inviſible GOD ſhould ſo greatly reſpect the ſons of men! *for what is man, that he ſhould be mindful of him; or the Son of man that he ſhould regard him?* Let us therefore that are the Lord's Remembrancers, give him no reſt, nor let him alone, until we have ſome ſecurity, and good aſſurance from him, that he will turn away from us the wrath which we moſt juſtly have deſerved; that he will ſpare us, and be merciful unto us. Yea, as the prophet ſaith, *Let us never leave him, nor give him over, till he repair and ſet up Jeruſalem the praiſe of the world: Iſa.* 62. 7. Leſt for default thereof, that be charged upon us, which was charged upon the head of ſome of the Prophets in *Iſrael*, that they were like the Foxes in the waſte places, that they had not riſen up in the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the houſe of *Iſrael.* (*Ezek.* 13. 4, 5.) For now adays (alas) we have many hedge-breakers, few hedge-makers; many openers of gaps, few ſtoppers; many makers of breeches, to let in the floods of God's wrath upon us, but very few that by true repentance go about to make up the breech, and to let down the ſluces, that the guſhing ſtreams of God's vengeance may be ſtopp'd and ſtayed.

Phil. *I do now plainly ſee, that there be ſome in high favour with God, and as we ſay, greatly in his books: ſith his love is ſo great unto them, that for their ſake he ſpareth thouſands.*

Theol. It is written in the Proverbs of *Solomon*, that the righteous in a Land are the eſtabliſhment of the King's Throne; and the wicked the overthrowing of the ſame. The words are theſe, *Take away the droſs from the ſilver, and there will proceed a veſſel for the finer. Take away the wicked from the King, and his*

Throne

throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed in righteouſneſs. (*Prov.* 25. 4, 5.) Likewiſe in another place the *wiſe man* affirmeth, that the righteous are the ſtrength and bulwarks of Citys, Towns and Corporations: but the wicked are the weakning and undoing of all. *Scornful men* (ſaith he) *ſet a City on fire: but the wiſe turn away wrath.* (*Prov.* 29. 8.) To this purpoſe moſt excellent is that ſaying of *Eliphas* in *Job*, *The innocent ſhall deliver the Iſland, and it ſhall be preſerved by the pureneſs of their hands.* (*Job.* 22. 30.) We read in the book of the *Chronicles*, that when the Levites and the Prieſts were caſt out by *Jeroboam*, they came to *Jeruſalem*, and all ſuch as ſet their hearts to ſeek the Lord God of *Iſrael* came with them. (2 *Chro.* 11. 14, 16, 17.) And then afterward it is ſaid, they ſtrengthned the Kingdom of *Judah*, and made *Rehoboam* the ſon of *Solomon* mighty. By all theſe teſtimonies it is evident, that Princes, Kingdoms, Citles, Towns and Villages, are fortified by the righteous therein: and for their ſakes alſo great plagues are kept back. Which thing one of the Heathen did well ſee into; as appeareth by his words, which are theſe: *When God meaneth well to a City, and will do it good, then he raiſeth up good men: but when he meaneth to puniſh a City or a Country, and do ill unto it, then he taketh away the good men from it.*

Phil. *It is very manifeſt, by all that you have alledged, that the wicked fare the better every day in the year, for the righteous that dwell amongſt them.*

Theol. All experience doth teach it, and the Scriptures do plainly avouch it. (*Gen.* 30. 27.) For did not churliſh *Laban* fare the better for *Jacob* his kinſman? Doth he not acknowledge that the Lord had bleſſed him for his ſake? (*Gen.* 39. 5.) Did not *Potipher* fare the better for Godly *Joſeph*? Doth not the Scripture ſay, that the Lord bleſſeth the *Egyptians* houſe for *Joſeph* his ſake? and that the Lord made all that he did to proſper in his hand? Did not *Obed Edom* fare the better for the Ark? (2 *Sam.* 6. 11.) Did not the ſeventy and ſix ſouls that were in the Ship with *Paul*,

ſpeed

ſpeed all the better for his ſake? (*Act.* 7. 14.) Did not the Angel of God tell him in the night, that God had given unto him all that ſailed with him? for otherwiſe a thouſand to one they had been all drowned. Therefore the children of God may very fitly be compared to a great piece of cork, which though it be caſt into the Sea, having many nails faſtned in it, yet it beareth them all up from ſinking, which otherwiſe would ſink of themſelves. What ſhall we ſay then? or what ſhall we conclude, but that the ungodly are more beholden to the righteous than they are aware of?

Phil. *I do think if it were not for God's children, it would go hard with the wicked. For if they were ſorted and ſhoaled out from amongſt them, and placed by themſelves, what could they look for but wrath upon wrath; and plague upon plague, till the Lord hath made a final conſumption, and ſwept them like dung from the face of the earth?*

Theol. Sure it is, all Creatures would frown upon them. The Sun would unwillingly ſhine upon them, or the Moon give them any light. The Stars would not be ſeen of them, and the Planets would hide themſelves. The beaſts would devour them. The fowls would pick out their eyes. The Fiſhes would make war againſt them, and all Creatures in Heaven and Earth, would riſe up in arms againſt them. Yea, the Lord himſelf from Heaven, would rain down fire and brimſtone upon them.

Phil. *Yet for all this, it is a wonder to conſider how deadly the wicked hate the righteous, and almoſt in every thing oppoſe themſelves againſt them, and that in moſt virulent and ſpightful manner. They rail and ſlander, ſcoff and ſcorn, mock and mow at them, as though they were not worthy to live upon the Earth, They eſteem every pelting Raſcal, and prefer every vile Varlet before them. And though they have their lives and liberty, their breath and ſafety, and all that they have elſe by them; yet for all that, they could be content to eat their heart with Garlick: ſo great, ſo fiery, ſo burning and hiſſing hot is their fury and malice againſt them.*

Theol. They may very fitly be compared to a Moth that fretteth in pieces the ſame cloth wherein ſhe is bred: or to a certain worm or canker that corrodeth or eateth thorow the heart of the Tree that nouriſheth her: or unto a man that ſtandeth upon a bough in the top of a Tree, where there is no more, and yet with an Ax choppeth it off, and therewithal falleth down with it, and breaketh his neck: Even ſo the Fools of this world do what they can to chop aſunder the bough that upholds them, but they may know eaſily what will follow.

Phil. *I ſee plainly they be much their own foes, and ſtand in their own light; and indeed know not what they do, For the benefit which they receive by ſuch, is exceeding great; and therefore by their maligning of them, they do but hold the ſtirrop to their own deſtruction.*

Theol. Now to apply theſe things to our ſelves, and to return to the firſt queſtion of this argument: may we not marvel that our Nation is ſo long ſpared, conſidering that the ſins thereof are ſo horrible and outragious as they be?

Phil. *We may juſtly marvel at the wonderful patience of God: and we may well think that there be ſome in the Land which ſtand in the breach, being in no ſmall favour with his Highneſs, ſith they do much prevail.*

Theol. The merciful preſervation of our moſt gracious King, who is the breath of our noſtrils, the long continuance of our peace, and of the Goſpel, the keeping back of the ſword out of the Land, which our ſins pull upon us, the fruſtrating of many plots and ſubtil devices which have been often invented againſt our State, yea, and the Life of his Majeſties moſt Royal perſon, make me to think, that there be ſome ſtrong pleaders with God for the publick good of us all.

Phil. *You may well think ſo indeed: for by our ſins we have forfeited, and dayly do forfeit into God's hands, both our King, our Country, our Peace, our Goſpel, our Lives, our Goods, our Lands, our Livings, our Wives, our Children, and all that we have: but only the righteous*

(*which*

(which are ſo near about the King, and in ſo high favour) do ſtep in, and earneſtly intreat for us, that the forfeitures may be releaſed, and that we may have leaſe (in parley) of them all again, or at leaſt a grant of further time. But, I pray you, Sir, are not we to attribute ſomething concerning our good eſtate to the policy of the Land, the Laws eſtabliſhed, and the wiſdom and counſel of our prudent Governours?

Theol. Yes aſſuredly, very much, as the ordinary and outward means which God uſeth for our ſafety. For though the Apoſtle *Paul* had a grant from God for the ſafety of his own life, and all that were with him in the ſhip; yet he ſaid, *Except the Mariners abide in the ſhip, we cannot be ſafe.* (*Act.* 27. 31.) Shewing thereby that unto faith and prayers, the beſt and wiſeſt means muſt be joyned. We are therefore upon our knees every day to give thanks unto God for ſuch good means of our ſafety as he hath given us.

Phil. *Well then, as the prayers of the righteous have been hitherto great means both for the hindring and turning away of wrath, and the continuance of favour; ſo ſhew, I pray you, what is the beſt courſe to be taken, and what in ſound wiſdom is to be done, both to prevent future dangers, and to continue God's Favours and mercies ſtill upon us.*

Theol. The beſt and ſureſt courſe that I can conſider or I can conceive of, is to repent heartily for ſins paſt, and to reform our lives in time to come; to ſeek the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is near; to forſake our own wayes, and our own imaginations, and to turn unto him with all our hearts, with weeping, with faſting, and with mourning, as the Prophet *Joel chap.* 2. adviſeth: *For our God is gracious and merciful, ſlow to anger, and of great kindneſs, and repenteth him of the evil.* All the Prophets do counſel us to follow this courſe, and do plainly teach, that if we all (from the higheſt to the loweſt) do meet the Lord with unfeigned repentance, and offer him the ſacrifice of a contrite ſpirit, undoubtedly he will be pacified toward us, and be merciful to our tranſgreſſions. This is moſt plainly ſet

down in the ſeventh Chapter of *Jeremy*, where the the Lord ſaith thus to his people. *Jer.* 5. 6. *If you amend and redreſs your wayes, and your works: If you execute judgment betwixt a man and his neighbour, and oppreſs not the ſtranger, the fatherleſs and the widow, and ſhed no innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods, to your deſtruction, then will I let you dwell in this place, even in the Land which I gave unto your fathers for ever and ever.* So likewiſe he ſaith by the ſame Prophet, (*Jer.* 22. 3, 4, 5.) *Execute ye judgment and righteouſneſs, and deliver the oppreſſed from the hand of the oppreſſour, and vex not the fatherleſs, the widow, or the ſtrangers; do no violence, nor ſhed innocent blood in this place. For if ye do this thing, then ſhall the King, ſitting upon the throne of* David, *enter in by the gates of this houſe, and ride upon Chariots, and upon Horſes, both he and his ſervants, and his people.* And again, (*Jer.* 3. 22.) *O ye diſobedient Children, return and I will heal your Rebellion,* The Lord alſo ſaith by his Prophet *Iſaiah*, (*Iſa.* 1. 19.) *If ye conſent and obey, ye ſhall eat the good things of the* Land, *but if ye refuſe, and be rebellious, ye ſhall be devoured with the ſword. For the mouth of the* LORD *hath ſpoken it.* The Prophet *Hoſea* ſaith, (*Hoſ.* 6. 1.) *Come, let us return to the* Lord; *for he hath ſpoiled, and he will heal us; he hath wounded us, and he will bind us up.* And again, (*Hoſ.* 13. 1.) *O Iſrael, return unto the* LORD, *(for thou haſt fallen by thine iniquity) and I will heal thy rebellion, and will love thee freely: for mine anger is turned away from thee. I will be as the dew unto Iſrael: he ſhall grow as the* Lily, *and faſten his root as the trees of* Lebanon. *His branches ſhall ſpread, and his beauty ſhall be as the Olive-tree, and his ſmell as* Lebanon.

The Prophet *Micah* telleth us what is good for us, and what is our beſt courſe, and what the Lord requireth at our hands, (*Mich.* 6. 8.) namely, theſe four things, *To do juſtice, to love mercy, to humble our ſelves, and to walk with God.* The Prophet *Amos* giveth the ſame counſel, (*Amos* 5. 13, 14, 15) ſaying, *Seek the Lord, and ye ſhall live. Seek good, and not evil.*

evil. Hate the evil, and love the good, and eſtabliſh judgment in the gate. It may be that the Lord of Hoſts will be merciful unto the remnant of Joſeph. And the Lord himſelf ſaith, (*Jer.* 18. 8.) *If this Nation, againſt whom I have pronounced, turn from their wickedneſs, I will repent of the plague I thought to bring upon them.* Thus we do plainly ſee what advice and counſel the Prophets and holy men of God do give unto us. The ſum of all is this, that *If* we do truly repent, and turn unto him with all our hearts, (ſtudying to obey him, and walk in his ways) then he will grant us any favour that we will require at his hands. For even as a wool-pack, or other ſoft matter, beateth back, and dampeth the force of all ſhot; ſo penitent, melting, and ſoft-hearts, do beat back the ſhot of God's wrath, and turn away his vengeance from us. Moreover, we may obſerve, in all experience, that when Potentates are offended, or any great man hath conceived a diſpleaſure againſt ſome poor man, then he muſt run and ride, ſend preſents, uſe his friends, break his ſleep, and never be quiet until he have pacified him. Even ſo muſt we deal with our God, ſeeing he hath taken a diſpleaſure againſt us.

O therefore that we would ſpeedily uſe all poſſible means to pacifie his wrath! O that we would with one heart and voice every one of us (from the higheſt to the loweſt) humble our ſelves before our God, forſake our former evil wayes, be grieved for that we have done, and purpoſe never to do the like again! Oh that it might go to the hearts of us, that we have ſo often and ſo grievouſly offended ſo loving a God, and ſo merciful a Father! Oh that we would awake once at laſt, and rowſe up our drowſie hearts, and ranſack our ſleepy conſciences, crying out againſt our ſins, that our ſins might never cry out againſt us! Oh that we would judge our ſelves, accuſe our ſelves, indite our ſelves and condemn our ſelves! ſo ſhould we never be adjudged, accuſed, indited, or condemned of the Lord. Oh that all hearts might ſob, all ſouls might ſigh, all loyns might be ſmitten with ſorrow, all faces gather black-

neſs, and every man ſmite himſelf on the thigh, ſaying, What have I done? Oh that both Magiſtracy, Miniſtry, and Commonalty, would purpoſe and vow, and even take a bond of themſelves; that from henceforth, and from this day forward, they would ſet their hearts to ſeek the Lord, and wholly give up themſelves to his obedience! Oh that all men, women and children, would fear God and keep his commandments; would eſchew evil and do good: would ſtudy to pleaſe God in all things, and to be fruitful in all good works, making conſcience to perform the duties of their general callings and duties of their ſpecial callings; duties of the firſt table, and duties of the ſecond table; that ſo God might be ſincerely worſhipped, his Name truly reverenced, his Sabbaths religiouſly obſerved; and that every man would deal kindly, mercifully, juſtly, and uprightly with his neighbour, that there might be no complaining, no crying in our ſtreets! Oh, I ſay, again and again, that if all of us, of what eſtate, degree, or condition ſoever, would walk in the paths of our God, then doubtleſs we ſhould live and ſee good dayes, all future dangers ſhould be prevented, our peace prolonged, our State eſtabliſhed, our King preſerved, and the Goſpel continued. Then ſhould we ſtill enjoy our lives, our goods, our lands, our livings, our wives, our children, our houſes and tenements, our orchards and gardens; yea, as the Prophet ſaith, we ſhall eat the good things of the Land, ſpend our dayes in much comfort, peace and tranquility, and leave great bleſſings unto our children and poſtery, from age to age, from generation to generation.

Phil. *You have fully anſwered my queſtion, and well ſatisfied me therein out of the Scriptures; yet, I pray you, give me leave to add one thing to that which you have at large ſet down. The Lord ſaith by the Prophet* Amos, (Amos 4. 6, 7.) *that for their ſins and rebellions, he had given them cleanneſs of teeth, that is, dearth and ſcarcity; and yet they did not turn unto him. Alſo he withheld the rain from them, and puniſhed them with drought; and yet they did not turn unto him. Moreover he ſmot their corn,*

corn, their great Gardens, their Orchards, Vineyards, Fig-trees, and Olive-trees, with blasting and mildew, and the Palmer-worm did devour them: and yet they did not return unto him. Last of all he smote them with the pestilence, and with the sword, and overthrew them, as he overthrew Sodom *and* Gomorrha, *and they were as a firebrand pluckt out of the burning; yet for all this they did not turn unto him. Ye have not turned unto me, saith the Lord. But now to come to the point. Out of this I gather, that if we multiply our transgressions, God will multiply his plagues upon us: but on the contrary, if we would unfeignedly turn unto the Lord our God with all our hearts, all plagues should be stayed, all dangers prevented, and no evil should fall upon us. For because they would not turn, therefore he smote them. If therefore they had turned, he would not have smote them. But now, I pray you, briefly conclude this point, and declare in few words what is is that doth most materially concern our our peace and publick good.*

Theol. These few then briefly I take to be the things which belong to our peace.

Ten things concerning our peace.

Let *Solomon* execute *Joab* and *Shimei*.

Let *Achab* and *Eliah* slay the Priests and Prophets of *Baal*.

Let *Aaron* and *Eleazar* minister before the Lord faithfully.

Let *Jonas* be cast out of the Ship.

Let *Moses* stand fast in the gap, and not let down his hand.

Let *Joshua* succeed him.

Let *Cornelius* fear God with all his houshold.

Let *Tabitha* be full of good works and alms-deeds

Let *Deborah* Judge long in *Israel*, prosper and be victorious.

Let us pray that the light of *Israel* may not be quenched.

And this I take to be the sum of all that belongs to our peace.

Phil. *The sum of all our conference hitherto, as I remember, may be reduced unto these few heads: First, mans*

natural corruption hath been laid open. Secondly, the horrible fruits thereof. Thirdly, their evil effects and workings, both againſt our ſouls and bodies, goods, name, and the whole Land. Laſtly, the remedies of all. Now therefore I would grow to ſome concluſion of that which you touched by the way, and made ſome mention of; namely, the ſigns of ſalvation and damnation; and declare unto us plainly, whether the ſtate of a mans ſoul before God, may not by certain ſigns and tokens, be certainly diſcerned in this life.

Theol. Beſides thoſe which before have been mentioned, we may add theſe nine following,

Nine ſigns of a ſound ſoul.

Reverence of Gods Name: Keeping of his Sabbaths. Truth. Sobriety. Induſtry. Compaſſion. Humility. Chaſtity. Contentation.

Phil. *Theſe indeed, I grant, are very good ſigns; but yet all of them are not certain: for ſome of them may be in the reprobates.*

Theol. What ſay you then to St. *Peters* ſigns, ſet down in the firſt chapter of his ſecond Epiſtle? which are theſe eight.

St. Peters *Eight ſigns of Salvation.*

Faith; Vertue; Knowledge; Temperance; Patience; Godlineſs; Brotherly kindneſs; Love.

Saint *Peter* ſaith, *If theſe be in us and abound, they will make us neither idle nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 8. Which is as much, as if he had ſaid, They will make us ſound and ſincere Profeſſors of the Goſpel.

Phil. *All theſe I grant are exceeding good ſigns and evidences of a mans ſalvation; but yet ſome of them may deceive, and a hole may be picked in ſome of theſe evidences; I would therefore hear of ſome ſuch demonſtrative and infallible Evidences, as no Lawyer can finde fault with. For I hold that Divines can as perfectly judge of the aſſurance and evidences of mans ſalvation, as the beſt Lawyer can judge of the aſſurances and evidences, whereby men hold their lands and livings.*

Theol. You have ſpoken truly in that: And would to God

God all the Lords people would bring forth the Evidences of their Salvation, that we might discern of them.

Phil. *Set down then, which be the most certain and infallible Evidences of a mans salvation; against which no exception can be taken,*

Theol. I judge these to be most sound and infallible.

Seven infallible signs of salvation.

Assured faith in the promises, *Act.*16.31.

Sincerity of heart.

The Spirit of Adoption.

Sound regeneration and sanctification.

Inward peace.

Groundedness in the truth.

Continuance to the end. *Prov.* 1. 20. *Joh.*1.41. *Rom.* 8.14. *Joh.*4.23. 1 *Thes.*4.15. *Rom.*5.1. *Col.*1.23. *Mat.*24.13

Phil. *Now you come near the quick indeed. For in my judgement, none of these can be found truely in any reprobate. Therefore I think no Divine can take exception against any of these.*

Theol. No, I assure you, no more than a Lawyer can finde fault with the Tenure of mens lands and fee-simples, when as both the title is good, and strong by Law, and the evidences thereof are sealed, subscribed, delivered, conveyed, and sufficient witness upon the same, and all other signs and ceremonies (in the delivering and taking possession thereof) according to strict law observed. For if a man have these forenamed evidences of his salvation, sure it is, his title and interest to heaven is good, by the Law of *Moses* and the Prophets, I mean the Word of God. God himself subscribeth to them: Jesus Christ delivereth them as his own deed: the Holy Ghost sealeth unto them: yea, the three great witnesses, which bear record in the earth, (that is, water, blood, and the spirit) do all witness the same.

Phil. *Now you have very fully satisfied me touching this point. And one thing more I do gather out of all your speech, to wit, that you do think a man may be assured of his salvation even in this life.*

Theol. I do think ſo indeed. For he that knoweth not in this life that he ſhall be ſaved, ſhall never be ſaved after this life. For St. *John* ſaith, *Now we are made the Sons of God.* (1 *John* 3. 2.)

Phil. *But becauſe many doubt of this, and the Papiſts do altogether deny it, therefore, I pray you confirm it unto us out of the Scriptures.*

Theol. The Apoſtle ſaith, *we know that if our earthly houſe of this Tabernacle be deſtroyed, we have a building given us of God; that is, an houſe not made with hands, but eternal in the Heavens.* (2 *Cor.* 5. 1.) Mark that he ſaith, Both he and the reſt of God's people, did certainly know that Heaven was provided for them. For the Spirit of Adoption beareth witneſs with our Spirits that we are the Children of God. (*Rom.* 8. 15, 16.) And again the ſame Apoſtle ſaith, *From henceforth is laid up for me, the Crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous judge ſhall give me at that day; and not to me only, but to all them that love his appearing.* (2 *Tim.* 4. 8.) Here we ſee, that he knew there was a Crown prepared for Him and for the Elect. And the ſame ſpirit which did aſſure it unto *Paul*, doth aſſure it alſo to all the Children of God. For they have all the ſame ſpirit, though not in the ſame meaſure. St. *John* ſaith alſo, *Herein we are ſure we know him, if we keep his commandments.* (1 *John* 2. 3.) In which words St. *John* telleth us thus much, that if we do unfeignedly endeavour to obey God; there is in us the true knowledge and fear of God; and conſequently, we are ſure we ſhall be ſaved. Saint *Peter* ſaith, *Give all diligence to make your calling and election ſure.* (2 *Pet.* 1. 10.) Wherefore ſhould the Apoſtle exhort us to make our election ſure, if none could be ſure of it? In the ſecond of the *Epheſians*, the Apoſtle ſaith flatly, that *in Chriſt Jeſus we do* already *ſit together in heavenly places.* His meaning is not, that, *we are there already in poſſeſſion*; but *we are as ſure of it, as if we were there already.* The Reaſons hereof are theſe: Chriſt our head is in poſſeſſion: Therefore he will draw all his members unto him, as he himſelf ſaith.

Se-

Secondly, We are as ſure of the thing which we hope for, as of that which we have, but we are ſure of that which we have, which is the work of grace: (*John* 12. 23.) therefore we are ſure of that we look for, which is the Crown of Glory. (*John.* 14. 13.) Many other places of the Holy Scriptures might be be alledged to this purpoſe; but, I ſuppoſe, theſe may ſuffice.

Phil. *As you have ſhewed this by the Scriptures: So alſo ſhew it more plainly by evident reaſon out of the ſame.*

Theol. How can a man in truth call God his Father, (when he ſaith, *Our Father which art in Heaven*) and yet doubt whether he is his Father or no? For if God indeed be our Father, and we his children, how can we periſh: how can we be damned? Will a Father condemn his own Children? Shall the Children of God be condemned? No, no: *There is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus.* (*Rom.* 8. 1.) Again, *Who can lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that juſtifieth, who can condemn?* (*Rom.* 8. 33, 34.) It is therefore moſt certain and ſure, that all ſuch as do in truth call God their Father, and have God for their Father, ſhall be ſaved. Again, how can a man ſay in truth and feeling, that he believes the forgiveneſs of ſins, and yet doubt whether he ſhall be ſaved? For if he be fully perſwaded that his ſins be forgiven, what letteth why he ſhould not be ſaved? Moreover, as certainly as we know we are called, juſtified and ſanctified: ſo certainly we know we ſhall be glorified. But we know the one certainly, and therefore the other.

Aſun. *I will never believe, that any man can certainly know, in this world, whether he ſhall be ſaved or damned, but all men muſt hope well, and be of a good belief.*

Theol. Nay, we muſt go further than hope well: we may not venter our ſalvation upon uncertain hopes. As if a man ſhould hope it would be a fair day to morrow: but he cannot certainly tell. No, no, we muſt in this caſe, being of ſuch infinite importance

portance as it is, grow to ſome certainty and full reſolution. We ſee worldly men will be loath to hold their Lands and Leaſes uncertainly, having nothing to ſhew for them. They will not ſtand to the courteſie of their Land-lords, nor reſt upon their good wills. They will not ſtay upon uncertain hopes. No, they are wiſer than ſo: For the Children of this world are wiſer in their generation, than the children of light. (*Luk.* 16. 8.) They will be ſure to have ſomething to ſhew. They will have it under Seal. They will not ſtay upon the words and promiſes of the moſt honeſt men, and beſt Land-lords. They cannot be quiet till they have it in white and black, with ſound counſel upon their Title and every way made as ſure unto them, as any Law of the Land can make it.

Are then the children of this world ſo wiſe in theſe inferiour things, and ſhall not we be as wiſe in matters of ten thouſand times more importance? Are they ſo wiſe for earth, and ſhall not be as wiſe for heaven? Are they ſo wiſe for their bodies, and ſhall not we be as wiſe for our ſouls? Shall we hold the ſtate of our immortal heritance by hope-well, and have no writings, or evidences, no ſeal, no witneſſes, nor any thing to ſhew for it? Alas! this is a weak Tenure, a broken Title, a ſimple hold indeed.

Aſun. *Yet for all that, a man cannot be certain.*

Theol. Yes: Saint *John* telleth us, we be certain. For he ſaith, (1 *John* 4. 13.) *Hereby we know we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit.* He ſaith not *we hope*; but, *we know certainly.* For he that hath the Spirit of God, knoweth certainly he hath it; and he that hath faith, knoweth that he hath faith; and he that ſhall be ſaved, knoweth he ſhall be ſaved. For God doth not work ſo darkly in mens hearts by his Spirits, but that they may eaſily know whether it be of him or no, if they would make a due tryal. Again, the ſame Apoſtle ſaith, *He that believeth in the Son of God, hath the witneſs in himſelf:* (1 *John* 5. 10.) That is, he hath certain teſtimonies in his

his own conſcience, that he ſhall be ſaved. For we muſt fetch the warrant of our Salvation from within our ſelves; even from the work of GOD within us: For look how much a man feeleth in himſelf the encreaſe of knowledge, obedience, and godlineſs, ſo much the more ſure he is that he ſhall be ſaved. A man's own Conſcience is of great force this way, and and will not lye or deceive. For ſo ſaith the wiſe man, (*Prov.* 27. 19.) *As water ſheweth face to face, ſo doth the heart, man unto man*: That is, the mind and conſcience of every man telleth him juſtly (though not perfectly) what he is. For the conſcience will not lye; but accuſe or excuſe a man, being inſtead of a thouſand witneſſes.

The Apoſtle ſaith, (1 *Cor.* 2. 11.) *No man knows the things of man, but the ſpirit of man that is in him.* And again, the Scripture ſaith, (*Prov.* 20. 27.) *Man's ſoul is as it were the Candle of the Lord, whereby he ſearcheth all the bowels of the belly.* So then it is a clear caſe, that a man muſt have recourſe to the work of God's grace within him, even in his own ſoul: and thereby he ſhall be certainly reſolved one way or other. For even as *Rebecca* knew certainly, by the ſtriving and ſtirring of the twins in her womb, that ſhe was conceived and quick of child: ſo God's children know certainly, by the motions and ſtirring of the Holy Ghoſt within them, that they have conceived Chriſt, and ſhall undoubtedly be ſaved.

Phil. *I pray you let us come to the ground work of this certainty of ſalvation, and ſpeak ſomewhat of that.*

Theol. The ground-work of our ſalvation is laid in God's eternal election; and, in reſpect thereof, it ſtandeth faſt and immoveable; as it is written, *The Foundation of God ſtandeth faſt.* (2 *Tim.* 2. 19.) And again, *He is faithful that hath promiſed*: (1 *Theſ.* 5. 24.) *Though we cannot believe, yet he abides faithful.* (2 *Tim.* 2. 13.) So then, as we know it certainly in our ſelves, by the conſequence of election: ſo it ſtandeth moſt firm in reſpect of God, and his eternal

and

and immutable decree. And a thouſand infirmities (nay, all the ſins of the world, nor all the Devils in hell) cannot overthrow God's election. For our Lord Jeſus ſaith, (*John* 6. 37.) *All that the Father hath given me, ſhall come unto me.* And again, *This is the Father's will that hath ſent me, that of all which he hath given me, I ſhould loſe nothing; but ſhould raiſe it up again at the laſt day.* And in another place our Saviour Chriſt ſaith, *My ſheep hear my voice, and I know them, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life: and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all: and none is able to take them out of my Fathers hand.* (*John.* 10. 27.) We ought therefore to be as ſure of our ſalvation, as of any other thing which God hath promiſed, or which we are bound to believe. For to doubt thereof, in reſpect of God's Truth, is blaſphemous againſt the immutability of his truth.

Phil. *But are there not not ſome doubts, at ſome times, even in the very Elect, and in thoſe which are grown to the greateſt perſwaſion?*

Theol. Yes verily. For he that never doubted, never believed. For whoſoever believeth in truth, feeleth ſometimes doubtings and waverings. Even as the ſound body feeleth many grudgings of Diſeaſes, which if he had not health, he could not feel: ſo the ſound ſoul feeleth ſome doubtings, which if it were not ſound, it could not ſo eaſily feel. For we feel not corruption by corruption, but we feel corruption by grace. And the more grace we have, the more quick we are in the feeling of corruption. Some men of tender skins, and quick feeling, will eaſily feel the lighteſt feather, in ſofteſt manner, laid upon the ball of their hands; which others, of more ſlow feeling and hard fleſh, cannot ſo eaſily diſcern. So then it is certain, that although the Children of God feel ſome doubtings at ſome times, yet the ſame do no whit impeach the certainty of their ſalvation; but rather argue a perfect ſoundneſs and health of their ſouls.

ſouls. For when ſuch little grudgings are felt in the ſoul, the Children of God oppoſe againſt them the certainty of God's Truth and promiſes, and ſo do eaſily overcome them. For the Lord's people need no more to fear them, than he that rides through the Streets upon a luſty Gelding, with his ſword by his ſide, needs to fear the barking and bawling of a few little curs, and whappets.

Phil. *Shew yet more plainly how or in what reſpect the child of GOD may both have doubtings and yet be fully aſſured.*

Theol. Even as a man ſet on the top of the higheſt ſteeple in the world, and ſo faſt bound unto it, that he cannot fall though he would, yet when he looketh downward, he feareth, becauſe man's nature is not acquainted nor accuſtomed to mount ſo high in the Air, and to behold the Earth ſo far beneath: but when he looketh upward, and perceiveth himſelf faſt bound, and out of all danger, then he caſteth away all care. Even ſo, when we look downward to our ſelves, we have doubts and fears; but when we look upward to Chriſt, and the truth of his promiſes, we feel our ſelves cock ſure, and ceaſe to doubt any more.

Phil. *Declare unto us what is the original of theſe doubts and fears, and from whence they ſpring in the children of God.*

Theol. They ſpring from the imperfection of our regeneration, and from that ſtrife which is in the very mind of the Elect, between faith and infidelity. For theſe two do mightily fight together in the moſt regenerate, and ſtrive to over-maſter and over-ſhadow one another. By reaſon whereof, ſometimes it cometh to paſs, through the prevailing of unbelief, that the moſt excellent Servants of God may fall into fits and pangs of deſpair, as *Job* and *David* in their temptations did. And even in theſe days alſo ſome of God's children at ſome times are ſhrewdly handled this way, and brought very low, even to deaths door: but yet the Lord in great mercy doth recover them

them both from total and final deſpair. Only they are humbled and tryed by theſe ſharp fits for a time, and that for their great good. For as we uſe to ſay, that an Ague in a young man, is a ſign of Health; ſo theſe burning fits of temptations in the Elect, for the moſt part, are ſigns of God's grace and favour: For if they were not of God, the Devil would never be ſo buſie with them.

Phil. *Is it not meer preſumption, and an over-much truſting to our ſelves, to be perſwaded of our ſalvation?*

Theol. Nothing leſs. For the ground of this perſwaſion is not laid in our ſelves, or any things within us, or without us, but only in the righteouſneſs of *Chriſt* and the merciful promiſes of God. For is it any preſumption for us, to believe that which God hath promiſed, Chriſt hath purchaſed, and the Holy Ghoſt hath ſealed? No verily, it is not any preſumption, but a thing which we all ſtand bound unto, as we will anſwer it at the dreadful day of judgment. As for our ſelves, we do freely confeſs, that in God's ſight we are but lumps of ſin, and maſſes of miſery, and cannot of our ſelves move hand or foot to the furtherance of our ſalvation. But being juſtified by faith, we are at peace with God, and fully perſwaded of his love and favour towards us in Chriſt.

Phil. *Cannot the reprobates and ungodly be aſſured of their ſalvation?*

Theol. No, For the Prophet ſaith, (*Iſa.* 57. 22.) *There is no peace to the wicked.* Then I reaſon thus: They which have not the inward peace, cannot be aſſured: But the wicked have not the inward peace, therefore they cannot be aſſured. Stedfaſt faith in the promiſes doth aſſure: But the wicked have not ſtedfaſt faith in the Promiſes: therefore they cannot be aſſured. The Spirit of adoption doth aſſure: But the wicked have not the ſpirit of adoption; therefore they cannot be aſſured.

To conclude: When a man feeleth in himſelf an evil conſcience, blindneſs, prophaneneſs, and diſobedience, he ſhall in deſpight of his heart, ſing this dole-

doleful ſong, I know not whether I ſhall be ſaved or damned.

Phil. *Is not the doctrine of the aſſurance of ſalvation a moſt comfortable doctrine?*

Theol. Yes doubtleſs, for except a man be perſwaded of the favour of God, and the forgiveneſs of ſins, and conſequently of his ſalvation, what comfort can he have in any thing? Beſides this, the perſwaſion of God's love towards us, is the root of all our love and chearful obedience towards him: for therefore we love him, and obey him, becauſe we know he hath loved us firſt, and written our names, in the Book of Life. But on the contrary, that general Doctrine of the Papiſts, which would have men alwaies doubt and fear in a ſervile ſort, is moſt helliſh and uncomfortable. For ſo long as a man holds that, what encouragement can he have to ſerve God? What love to his Majeſty? What hope in the promiſes? What comfort in trouble? What patience in adverſity?

Antil. *Touching this point, I am flat of your mind. For I think verily a man ought to be perſwaded of his ſalvation: and for my own part I make no queſtion of it: I hope to be ſaved as well as the beſt of them all. I am out of fear for that. For I have ſuch a ſtedfaſt faith in God, that if there ſhould be but two in the world ſaved, I hope I ſhould be one of them.*

Theol. You are very confident indeed. You are perſwaded before you know. I would your ground were as good as your vain confidence. But who is ſo bold as blind Bayard? Your hope is but fancy, and as a ſick man's dream. You hope you cannot tell what. You have no ground for what you ſay. For what hope can you have to be ſaved, when you walk in no path of ſalvation? What hope can a man have to come to *London* ſpeedily, that travelleth nothing that way, but quite contrary? What hope can a man have to reap a good crop of Corn, that uſeth no means, neither ploweth, ſoweth, nor harroweth? What hope can a man have to be fat, and well liking

of

of his body, that ſeldom or never eateth any meat? What hope can a man have to eſcape drowning, which leapeth into the Sea? Even ſo, what hope can you have to be ſaved, when you walk not in that way, when you uſe no means, when you do all things that are contrary to the ſame? For (alas!) there is nothing in you of thoſe things which the Scriptures do affirm muſt be in all thoſe that ſhall be ſaved. There be none of the forenamed ſigns and tokens in you. You are ignorant, profane and careleſs. God is not worſhipped under your roof. There is no true fear of God in your ſelf, nor in your houſhold. You ſeldom hear the word preached. You content your ſelf with an ignorant Miniſter. You have no prayers in your Family, no reading, no ſinging of Pſalms, no inſtructions, exhortations, admonitions, or any other Chriſtian exerciſes. You make no conſcience of the obſervation of the Sabbath. You uſe not the name of God with any reverence. You break out ſometimes into horrible Oaths and curſings. You make an ordinary matter of ſwearing by your Faith and your Troth. Your wife is irreligious, your children diſſolute and ungracious, your ſervants prophane and careleſs. You are an example in your own houſe of all Atheiſm and conſcienceleſs behaviour. You are a great gameſter, a riotor, a ſpend-thrift, a drinker, a common Alehouſe-hunter, a whore-hunter; and, to conclude, given to all Vice and naughtineſs. Now then, I pray you tell me, or rather let your conſcience tell me, what hope can you have to be ſaved, ſo long as you walk and continue in this courſe? Doth not St. *John* ſay, *If we ſay we have fellowſhip with him, and walk in darkneſs, we are liers?* (1 *Joh.* 1. 6.) Doth not the ſame Apoſtle avouch, that ſuch as ſay they know God, and keep not his commandments, are lyers? (1 *Joh.* 2. 4.)

Again, doth he not ſay, *He that committeth ſin is of the Devil*, 1 *Joh.* 3. 8. And, *Whoſoever doth not righteouſneſs, is not of God?* Doth not our Lord Jeſus flatly tell the Jews, (which bragged that *Abraham* was their father)

father) that they were of their father the Devil becauſe they did his works? Doth not the Apoſtle *Paul* ſay, *His ſervants we are to whom we obey, whether it be of ſin unto death, or of obedience unto righteouſneſs? Rom.6.16.* Doth not the Scripture ſay, *He that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous?* 1 Joh. 3. 7. Doth not our Lord Jeſus affirm, that, *Not every one that ſaith, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven? Mat. 7. 21.* Therefore I conclude, that foraſmuch as your whole courſe is carnal, careleſs and diſſolute, you can have no warrantable hope to be ſaved.

Phil. *I do verily think that this mans caſe (which now you have laid open) is the caſe of thouſands.*

Theol. Yea, doubtleſs, of thouſand thouſands, the more is the pity.

Aſun. *Soft and fair, Sir, you are very round indeed. Soft fire maketh ſweet malt,* I *hope you know we muſt be ſaved by mercy, not by merit. If* I *could do all my ſelf, wherefore ſerveth Chriſt? I hope that which I cannot do, he will do for me. And* I *hope to be ſaved by Jeſus Chriſt, as well as the beſt of you all.*

Theol. Oh, now I ſee which way the game goeth. You would fain make Chriſt a cloak for your ſins. You will ſin that grace may abound. You will ſin frankly, and ſet all upon Chriſts ſcore. Truly, there be many thouſands of your mind, hearing of Gods abundant mercy in Chriſt; are thereby made more bold to ſin. But they ſhall know one day to their coſt, what it is to abuſe the mercy of GOD. The Apoſtle ſaith, *The mercy and loving kindneſs of God, ſhould lead us to repentance, Rom.* 2. 4. But we ſee it leads many to further hardneſs of heart. The Prophet ſaith, *With him is mercy that he may be feared, Pſal.*130.4. But many are thereby made more ſecure and careleſs. But to come nearer to the mark. You ſay you hope to be ſaved by Jeſus Chriſt. I anſwer, if thoſe things be found in you which the Scripture avouch to be in all that ſhall be ſaved by him, then you may have good confidence, and aſſured hope, otherwiſe not.

Now

Now the Scriptures do thus determine it, and ſet it down, that if a man be in Chriſt, and look to be ſaved by him he muſt be endued with theſe qualities following.

Nine things required of all that ſhall be ſaved by Chriſt.

1. He muſt be a new creature, 2 *Cor.* 5.17. 2. He muſt live, not after the luſts of men, but after the will of God, 1 *Pet.* 4. 2. 3. He muſt be zealous of good works, *Tit.* 2. 14. 4. He muſt dye to ſin, and live to righteouſneſs, *Rom.* 6.14. 5. He muſt be holy and unblameable, *Col.* 1.22. 6. He muſt ſo walk as Chriſt hath walked, 1 *Joh.* 2. 6. 7. He muſt crucifie the fleſh with the affections and luſts, *Gal.* 5. 24. 8. He muſt walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit, *Rom.* 8. 1. 9. Laſt of all, he muſt ſerve God in righteouſneſs and true holineſs all the dayes of his life, *Luk.* 1.75.

Lo then what things are required of all that ſhall be ſaved by Chriſt. Now therefore if theſe things be in you in ſome meaſure of truth, then your hope is currant, ſound and good; otherwiſe it is nothing worth. For in vain do men ſay, They hope to be ſaved by Chriſt, when as they walk diſſolutely. The reaſon hereof is, becauſe the members muſt be ſutable to the head; but Chriſt our head is holy, and therefore we his members muſt be holy alſo: as it is written, *Be ye holy, for I am holy,* 1 *Pet.* 1. 16. Otherwiſe, if we will joyn profane and ungodly members to our holy head Chriſt, then we make Chriſt a monſter. As if a man ſhould joyn unto the head of a Lyon, the Neck of a Bear, the body of a Wolf, and the legs of a Fox, were it not a monſtrous thing? would it not make a monſtrous creature? Even ſuch a thing they go about, which would have Swearers, Drunkards, Whoremongers, and ſuch like to be members of Chriſt, and to have life and ſalvation by him. But ſith you do ſo much preſume on Chriſt, I pray you let me ask you a queſtion.

Antil. What is that?

Theol. How do you know that Chriſt dyed for you particularly and by name?

Antil.

Antil. Christ dyed for all men, and therefore for me.

Theol. But all men shall not be saved by Christ. How therefore do you know that you are one of them that have special intereſt in Christ, and shall be saved by his death?

Antil. *This I know, we are all sinners, and cannot be saved by any other than by Christ.*

Theol. Answer directly to my question. How do you know in your self, and for your self, that you are one of the Elect, and one of those for whom Christ dyed?

Antil. I *know it by my good faith in God, because I put my whole trust in him, and in none other.*

Theol. But how know you, that you have faith? or how shall a man know his faith?

Antil. I *know it by this, that I have alwayes had as good a meaning, and as good a faith to God-ward, as any man of my calling, and that is not book-learned, I have alwaies feared God with all my heart, and served him with my prayers.*

Theol. Tush, now you go about the bush, and hover in the air; answer me to the point. How do you know certainly, and assuredly, that Christ dyed for you particularly and by name.

Antil. *You would make a man mad. You put me out of my faith; you drive me from Christ. But if you go about to drive me from Christ, I will never believe you. For I know we must be saved onely by him.*

Theol. I go not about to drive you from Christ, but to drive you to Christ. For how can I drive you from Christ; seeing you never came near him? How can I drive you out of Christ, seeing you were never in him? But this it is, that deceiveth you and many others, that you think you believe in Christ, because you say you believe in Christ; as though faith consisted in words; or as though a man had faith, because he saith so. If every one that saith he hath faith, therefore hath faith; and every one that saith he believeth Christ, doth therefore believe; then who will not have faith? who will not believe? But in very deed your faith, and the faith of many others, is

nothing

nothing elſe but meer imagination. But all this while you have not anſwered my queſtion touching your particular knowledge of Chriſt.

Antil. I *can anſwer you no otherwiſe than* I *have anſwered you. And* I *think* I *have anſwered you ſufficiently.*

Theol. No, no; you faulter in your ſpeech; your anſwer is not worth a button: you ſpeak you wot not what, you are altogether befogged and benighted in this queſtion. But if there were in your heart the true knowledge and lively feeling of God, Then I am ſure you would have yielded another and a better anſwer; then you would have ſpoken ſomething from the ſence and feeling of your own heart, and from the work of Gods grace within you. But becauſe you can yield no ſound reaſon that Chriſt dyed for you particularly and by name, therefore I ſuſpect you are none of them which have proper intereſt in him, and in whom his death takes effect indeed.

Phil. I *think this queſtion would gravel a great number; and few there be that can anſwer it aright.*

Theol. It is moſt certain, I know it by lamentable experience, that not one of a hundred can ſoundly and ſufficiently anſwer this queſtion; none indeed, but only thoſe in whom the new work is wrought, and do by the inward work of the Spirit feel Chriſt to be theirs. I have talked with ſome, which are both witty, ſenſible and learned, who notwithſtanding, when they have been brought to this very point and iſſue, have ſtuck ſore at it, and ſtaggered very much. And howſoever they might by wit and learning ſhuffle it over, and in a blundering ſort ſpeak reaſon, yet had they no feeling of that which they ſaid, and therefore no aſſurance; and conſequently, as good never a whit as never the better. It is the ſanctifying Spirit, that giveth feeling in this point: and therefore without the feeling of the operation of the ſame Spirit, it can never be ſoundly anſwered. Thus then, I do cloſe up this whole matter: As the Vine-branch cannot live and bring forth fruit, except it abide in the Vine; no more can we, except we abide in Chriſt, and be truely grafted in him by a lively

lively faith: None can have any benefit by him: but they only which dwell in him: None can live by Chriſt, but they which are changed into Chriſt: none are partakers of his body, but they which are in his body: None can be ſaved by Chriſt crucified, but they which are crucified with Chriſt: None can live with him being dead, but thoſe which dye with him being alive. Therefore let us root downward in mortification, that we may ſhoot upward in Sanctification: let us dye to ſin, that we may live to righteouſneſs; let us die while we are alive, that we may live when we are dead.

Aſun. *If none can be ſaved by Chriſt, but only thoſe which are ſo qualifyed as you ſpeak of, then Lord have mercy upon us; then the way to Heaven is very ſtrait indeed, and few at all ſhall be ſaved. For there be few ſuch in the world.*

Theol. You are no whit therein deceived. For when all comes to all, it is moſt certain, that few ſhall be ſaved: Which thing I will ſhew unto you both by Scripture, reaſons and examples.

Aſun. *Firſt then, let us hear it proved by the Scriptures.*

Theol. Our Lord Jeſus ſaith, (*Mat.* 7. 12.) *Enter in at the ſtrait gate. For it is the wide gate, and broad way that leads to deſtruction; and many there be which go in thereat: becauſe the gate is ſtrait, and the way narrow, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* Again, he ſaith, (*Mat.* 20. 16.) *Many are called, but few are choſen.* In another place, we read of a certain man which came to our Saviour Chriſt, and asked him of purpoſe, whether few ſhould be ſaved? To whom our Saviour anſwered thus: (*Luk.* 13.24.) *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate. For many (I ſay unto you) will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able.* In which anſwer, albeit our Saviour doth not anſwer directly to his queſtion, either negatively or affirmatively, yet doth he plainly inſinuate by his ſpeeches, that few ſhall be ſaved. For firſt, he bids us ſtrive earneſtly,

carneſtly, noting thereby, that it is a matter of great grief againſt the world, the Fleſh and the Devil. Secondly, he affirmeth, that the gate is very ſtrait; noting that none can enter in without vehement crowding, and almoſt breaking their ſhoulder-bones. Laſtly, he ſaith, That many which ſeek to enter in, ſhall not be able; noting thereby, that even of them that ſeek, many ſhall ſtep ſhort, becauſe they ſeek him not aright. *Eſaias* alſo ſaith, *Except the Lord of Hoſts had left us a ſeed, we had been as Sodom, and had been like to Gomorah, Iſa.* 1. 9. The Apoſtle alſo alledgeth out of the Prophet, that *the Lord will make a ſhort account in the earth, and gather it into a ſhort ſum with righteouſneſs, Rom.* 9. 28. *Iſa.* 10. 22. Theſe Scriptures, *I* think are ſufficient to prove that few ſhall be ſaved.

Aſun. *Now let us hear your reaſons.*

Theol. If we come to reaſon, we may rather wonder that any ſhould be ſaved, than that few ſhall be ſaved. For we have all the lets and hindrances that may be, both within us and without us. We have (as they ſay) the Sun, Moon, and ſeven Stars againſt us. We have all the Devils in Hell againſt us, with all their horns, heads, marvellous ſtrength, infinite wiles, cunning deviſes, deep ſleights, and methodical temptations. Here runs a ſore ſtream againſt us. Then have we this preſent evil world againſt us, with her innumerable baits, ſnares, nets, gins, and grins, to catch us, fetter us, and entangle us. Here we have profits and pleaſures, riches and honour, wealth and preferment, ambition and covetouſneſs. Here comes in a Camp-Royal of ſpiritual and inviſible enemies. Laſtly, we have our fleſh, that is, our corrupted nature, againſt us; we have our ſelves againſt our ſelves. For we our ſelves are as great enemies to our ſalvation, as either the world or the Devil. For our Underſtanding, Reaſon, Will and Affections, are altogether againſt us. Our natural wiſdom is an enemy unto us. Our concupiſcences and luſts do miniſter ſtrength to Satans temptations. They are all in a league with Satan againſt us. They take part with him in every thing againſt us and our ſalvation.

tion. They fight all under his ſtandard, and receive their pay of him. This then goeth hard on our ſide, that the Devil hath an inward part againſt us, and we carry alwayes within us, our greateſt enemy, which is ever ready, day and night, to betray us into the hands of Satan; yea, to unbolt the door, and let him in to cut our throats. Here then we ſee an huge Army of dreadful enemies, and a very Legion of Devils lying in ambuſh againſt our ſouls, Are not we therefore poor wretches in a moſt pitiful caſe, which are thus betrayed and beſieged on every ſide! All things then conſidered, may we not juſtly marvel that any ſhall be ſaved? For who ſeeth not, who knoweth not, that thouſand thouſands are carryed headlong to deſtruction, either with the temptations of the world, the fleſh or the Devil? But yet further, I will ſhew by another very manifeſt and apparent reaſon, that the number of God's Elect upon the face of the earth, are very few in compariſon; which may thus be conſidered: Firſt, let there be taken from amongſt us all treacherous Papiſts, Atheiſts and Hereticks. Secondly, let there be ſhoaled out all vicious and notorious Evil-livers; as, Swearers, Drunkards, Whoremongers, Worldlings, Deceivers, Couſeners, proud men, Rioters, Gameſters, and all the profane multitude, Thirdly, Let there be refuſed and ſorted out, all Hypocrites, carnal Proteſtants, vain Profeſſors, Back-ſliders, Deceivers and cold Chriſtians. Let all theſe, I ſay, be ſeparated, and then tell me how many ſound, ſincere, faithful and zealous Worſhippers of God will be found amongſt us. I ſuppoſe we ſhould not need the Art of Arithmetick to number them. For I think there would be very few in every Village, Town and City; I doubt they would walk very thinly in the ſtreets, ſo as a man might eaſily tell them as they go. Our Lord Jeſus asks a queſtion in the Goſpel of St. *Luke*, ſaying, *Do you think when the Son of man cometh that he ſhall find faith on the earth?* (*Luk.* 18. 8.) To which we may anſwer, ſurely very little.

Phil. *Now according to your promiſe, ſhew this thing alſo by examples.*

Theol. In the firſt age of the world, all fleſh had ſo corrupted their waies, that *God* could no longer bear them, but even vowed their deſtruction by the overflowing of waters. When the flood came, how few were found faithful? Eight perſons only were ſaved by the Ark. How few righteous were found in *Sodom*, and the Cities adjoyning? But one poor *Lot* and his Family. How few Believers were found in *Jericho*? But one *Rahab*. How few of the old *Iſraelites* entred into the Land of Promiſe? But two, *Caleb* and *Joſhua*; the reſt could not enter in, becauſe of their unbelief. The true and viſible Church was ſmall, (*Heb.* 3. 19.) during the Government of the Judges, as appeareth plentifully in that Book. In *Eliah*'s time, the Church was ſo ſmall, that it did not appear. In the Reign of the Kings of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, (1 *King.* 20. 27.) the ſincere worſhippers were very few, as appeareth by all the Prophets. During the Captivity, the Church was as the Moon under a Cloud, ſhe was driven into the Wilderneſs, where ſhe hid her ſelf. During the perſecutions of the Greek Empire, by *Gog*, *Magog* and *Ægypt*, they were feweſt of all. In Chriſt's time what a ſilly Company did he begin withal? How were all things corrupted by the Prieſts, Scribes and Phariſees? In the beginning of the Apoſtles preaching, there were but few believers. After the firſt ſix hundred years, what an Eclipſe was in the Church, during the height of Antichriſtian Reign? How few true Worſhippers of GOD were in the world for the ſpace almoſt of Seven Hundred years? Since the Goſpel was broached and ſpread abroad, how few do believe? And as the Prophet ſaith, *Lord who hath believed our report?* (*Eſay.* 53. 1.) Thus then you ſee it is apparent, (both by Scripture, reaſon and examples of all ages) that the number of the Elect is very ſmall, and when all comes to all, few ſhall be ſaved.

Phil.

Phil. I *pray you tell us how few, and to what ſcantling they may be reduced; whether one of a hundred, or one of a thouſand ſhall be ſaved?*

Theol. No man knows that, neither can I give you any direct and certain anſwer unto it. But I ſay, that in compariſon of the Reprobate, there ſhall but a few be ſaved For all that profeſs the Goſpel, are not the true Church before God. There be many in the Church, which are not of the Church.

Phil. *How do you prove that?*

Theol. Out of the ninth to the *Romans*, where the Apoſtle ſaith, *All are not Iſrael, that are of Iſrael.* (*Rom.* 9. 6.) And again, *Eſay* cryeth concerning *Iſrael*, *Though the number of the children of Iſrael were as the ſand of the Sea, yet but a remnant ſhall be ſaved.* (*Ro.* 9. 27.)

Phil. *How do you ballance it in the viſible Church, or in what compariſon do you take it? Let us hear ſome eſtimate of it. Some think one of an hundred, ſome, but one of a thouſand ſhall be ſaved.*

Theol. Indeed I have heard ſome learned and Godly Divines give ſuch conjectures: but for that matter I can ſay nothing to it. But only let us obſerve the compariſon of the Holy Ghoſt betwixt a remnant and the ſand of the Sea, and it will give ſome light into the matter. (*Rom.* 9. 27.)

Phil. *Doth not the knowledge of this Doctrine diſcourage men from ſeeking after God?*

Theol. Nothing leſs: but rather it ought to awake and ſtir up in us a greater care of our ſalvation that we may be in the number of Chriſt's little flock, which make an end of their ſalvation in fear and trembling. (*Phil.* 2. 12.)

Phil. *Some make light of all theſe matters. Others ſay, As for the life to come, that is the leaſt matter of an hundred to be cared for. As for that matter, they will leave it to God, even as pleaſeth him: they will not meddle with it. For they ſay, God that made them, muſt ſave them. They hope they ſhall do as well as others, and make as good ſhift as their Neighbours.*

Theol. It is lamentable that men ſhould be ſo careleſs, and make ſo light of that which (of all other things) is moſt weighty and important. *For what ſhall it profit a man though he ſhould win the whole world, if he loſe his ſoul?* as the Author of all wiſdom teſtifieth, *Mat.* 16. 26.

Antil. *I pray you, Sir, under correction, give me leave to ſpeak my mind in this point. I am an ignorant man, pardon me, if I ſpeak amiſs: for a fool's bolt is ſoon ſhot.*

Theol. Say on.

Antil. *I do verily think that God is ſtronger than the Devil. Therefore I cannot believe that he will ſuffer the Devil to have more than himſelf. He will not take it at his hands. He loveth mankind better than ſo.*

Theol. You do carnally imagine, that God will wreſtle and ſtrive with the Devil about the matter. As for God's power, it doth never croſs his will; for God can do nothing againſt his Will and Decree, becauſe he will not.

Aſun. *Yea, but the Scripture ſaith, God will have all men ſaved.*

Theol. That is not meant of every particular man, but of all ſorts ſome; ſome Jews, ſome Gentiles; ſome rich, ſome poor, ſome high, ſome low, *&c.*

Aſun, *Chriſt dyed for all; therefore all ſhall be ſaved.*

Theol. Chriſt dyed for all in ſufficiency of his death, but not in efficacy unto life. For only the Elect ſhall be ſaved by his death: as it is written, *This is my blood in the New Teſtament which is given for you;* (*Luk.* 22. 20.) meaning his Diſciples and choſen Children. And again, Chriſt being conſecrated, is made the *Author of ſalvation to all that obey him.*

Aſun. *God is merciful, and therefore I hope he will ſave the greateſt part for his mercy ſake.*

Theol. The greateſt part ſhall periſh: but all that ſhall be ſaved, ſhall be ſaved by his mercy: as it is written, *He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardneth.* (*Rom.* 9. 18.) And again, *It is not in him that willeth, or in him that runneth, but in God that ſheweth mercy.* Therefore though God

God be infinite in mercy, and Christ infinite in merit, yet none shall have mercy, but only the Vessels of mercy.

Antil. *Can you tell who shall be saved, and who shall be damned? Do you know God's secrets? When were you in Heaven? When spake you with God? I am of the mind that all men shall be saved. For God's mercy is above all his works. Say you what you will, and what you can, God did not make us to condemn us.*

Theol. You are very peremptory indeed: you are more bold than wise; for Christ saith, *Few shall be saved*; you say, All shall be saved. Whether then shall we believe Christ or you?

Antil. *If there should come two souls, one from Heaven, and another from hell, and bring us certain news how the case stood, then I would believe it indeed.*

Theol. Put case two souls of the dead should come, the one from Heaven, the other from Hell I can tell you afore-hand certainly what they would say, and what news they would bring.

Antil. *What, I pray you?*

Theol. They would say, There be few in Heaven, and many in Hell: Heaven is empty, and Hell is full.

Antil. *How know you that? how know you they would say so?*

Theol. I am sure if they speak the truth, they must needs say so.

Antil. *Must they needs? Why I pray you, must they needs?*

Theol. Because the Word of God saith so, Because *Moses* and the Prophets say so. If you will not believe *Moses* and the Prophets, neither will you believe, though one, though two, though an hundred should rise from the dead.

Antil. *Yes, but I would.*

Theol. I pray you let me ask you a question: whether do you think that God and his Word, or the souls of dead men, are more to be credited?

Antil. *If I were ſure that God ſaid ſo, then I would believe it.*

Theol. If his word ſay ſo, doth not he ſay ſo? Is not he and his Word all one?

Antil. *Yet for all that, if I might hear God himſelf ſpeak it, it would move me much.*

Theol. You ſhew your ſelf to be a notable Infidel. You will not believe God's Word without ſigns miracles, and wonders from the dead.

Antil. *You ſpeak as though you knew certainly that Hell is full: you do but ſpeak at randome, you cannot tell, you were never there to ſee. But for mine own part, I believe there is no Hell at all, but only the Hell of a man's conſcience.*

Theol. Now you ſhew your ſelf in kind what you are. You ſay you believe no Hell at all. And, I think if you were well examined, you believe no heaven at all, neither God nor Devil.

Antil. *Yes, I believe there is a Heaven, becauſe I ſee it with mine eyes.*

Theol. You will believe no more belike than you ſee: but, *Bleſſed is he that believeth, and ſeeth not.* (*Joh.* 20. 29.) You are one of the rankeſt Atheiſts that ever I talked withal.

Antil. *You ought not to judge, you know not men's hearts.*

Theol. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh, Mat. 12. 34.) You have ſufficiently bewrayed your heart by your words: for the tongue is the key of the mind. As for judging, I judge you only by your fruits: which is lawful. For we may juſtly ſay, It is a bad tree which bringeth forth bad fruit: and he that doth wickedly, is a wicked man. But it is you, and ſuch as you are, that will take upon you to judge mens hearts: For though a man's outward actions be religious and honeſt, yet you will condemn him. And if a man give himſelf to the Word and Prayer, reform his family, and abſtain from the groſs ſins of the world, you will by and by ſay, He is an Hypocrite. And thus you take upon you to judge

mens

mens hearts, as though you knew with what affection theſe things are done.

Antil. I *confeſs* I *am a ſinner, and ſo are all other for ought I know. There is no man but he may be amended. I pray God ſend us all of his grace, that we may pleaſe him, and get to Heaven at the laſt.*

Theol. Now you would ſhuffle up all together, as though you were as good as the beſt, and as though there were no difference of ſinners: but you muſt learn to know that there is a great difference of ſinners, for there is the penitent and impenitent ſinner; the careful and the careleſs ſinner; the ſinner whoſe ſins are not imputed, and the ſinner whoſe ſins are imputed; the ſinner that ſhall be ſaved, and the ſinner that ſhall be damned. For it is one thing to ſin of frailty, another thing to live in it, dwell in it, and trade in it, (as the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh) to ſuck it in, as the Fiſh ſucketh water, and to draw it unto us with cart-ropes, and cords of vanity. (*Eſa.* 5 18.)

To conclude therefore: there is as great difference betwixt a ſinner and a ſinner, as betwixt light and darkneſs. For though God's Children be ſinners in reſpect of the remnants of ſin within them, yet the Scriptures call them Juſt and Righteous, becauſe they are juſtified by Chriſt, and ſanctified by his Grace and Holy Spirit. And for this cauſe it is, that St. *John* ſaith, *He that is born of God, ſinneth not.* 1 *John.* 4. 6.

Antil. *What, I pray you, did you never ſin?*

Theol. Yes, and what then? what are you the better?

Antil. *You Preachers cannot agree amongſt your ſelves: one ſaith one thing, and another ſaith another thing, ſo that you bring the ignorant people into a mammering, and they know not on which hand to take.*

Theol. The Preachers, God be thanked, agree very well together in all the main grounds of Religion, and principal points of ſalvation. But if they diſſent in ſome other matters, you are to try the ſpirits. Whether they be of God or no. You muſt try all things and keep that which is good.

Antil. *How can plain and ſimple men try the ſpirits, and doctrines of the Preachers?*

Theol. Yes, for the Apoſtle ſaith, *The ſpiritual man diſcerneth all things*, 1 *Cor.*2.15. And S. *John* ſaith to the holy Chriſtians, *You have received an oyntment from that holy One, and know all things*, (1 *Joh.* 2. 20.) that is, all things neceſſary to ſalvation. Thoſe therefore which have the Spirit of God, can judge and diſcern of doctrines, whether they be of God or no.

Antil. I *am not book-learned, and therefore I cannot judge of ſuch matters; As for hearing of Sermons, I have no leiſure to go to them*, I *have ſomewhat elſe to do. Let them that are bookiſh, and hear ſo many Sermons, judge of ſuch matters; for* I *will not meddle with them, they belong not unto me.*

Theol. Yet for all that, you ought to read the Scriptures and hear the Word of *God* preached, that you may be able to diſcern betwixt truth and falſhood in in matters of Religion.

Antil. *Belike you think none can be ſaved without preaching, and that all men ſtand bound to frequent Sermons: but* I *am not of your minde in that.*

Theol. Our Lord Jeſus ſaith, *My ſheep hear my voice*, *Joh.*10.16. And again he ſaith, 8.47. *He that is of God, heareth Gods Word. Ye therefore hear it not, becauſe ye are not of God.* You ſee therefore how Chriſt Jeſus maketh it a ſpecial note of Gods children to hear his Word Preached.

Antil. *But* I *think we may ſerve God well enough without a Preacher. For Preachers are but men, and what can they do? A Preacher is a good man ſo long as he is in the Pulpit; but if he be out of the Pulpit, he is but as another man.*

Theol. You ſpeak contemptuouſly of Gods meſſengers, and of Gods ſacred ordinance. But the Apoſtle doth fully anſwer your objection, ſaying, *Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God: and how can they hear without a Preacher?* (*Rom.*10.17.) In which words the Apoſtle tells you flatly, that you can never have faith nor ſerve God aright without Preaching.

Antil.

Antil. *When you have preached all that you can, you can make the word of God no better than it is; and some put in and put out what they list. The Scriptures are but mens inventions, and they made the Scriptures.*

Theol. We preach not to make the Word better, but to make you better. As for putting in and putting out, it is a meer untruth. And whereas you say. The Scriptures were made by men, it is blasphemy once to think it; and you are worthy to receive your answer at *Tiburn.*

Antil. *Now I see you are hot. I perceive for all your godliness, you will be angry.*

Theol. I take it to be no sin to be angry against sin. For your sin is very great, and who can bear it?

Antil. *All this while you speak much for preaching, but you say nothing for prayer. I think there is as much need of prayer, as preaching. For I finde in the Scriptures, Pray continually; but I finde not, Preach continually.*

Th. No man denyeth but that Prayer is most needful, alwayes to be joyned unto Preaching, and all other holy exercises: for it is the hand-maid to all. But yet we prefer Preaching above it, because Preaching is both the director and whet-stone of Prayer; yea it steereth us aright in all spiritual actions and services whatsoever: without the which we can keep no certain course, but are ever ready to erre on this hand or that. Now whereas you say you find, *Pray continually*, but not *Preach continually*, you might (if you were not wilfully blind) find also, *Preach continally*: (2. *Tim.* 4. 2.) for the Apostle saith, *Be instant, preach the Word in season and out of season*, that is, alwayes, as time and occasion shall serve.

Antil. *You extol preaching, but you say nothing for reading I belive you condemn reading.*

Theol. Doth he that highly commendeth gold, condemn silver? I do ingenuously confess, that both publick and private reading of the Scriptures, is very necessary and profitable, and would to God it were more used than it is; for it is of singular use, both to increase knowledge and judgement, and also to make us more fit to hear the Word preached. For such men

as are altogether ignorant of the Hiſtory of the Bible, can hear the Word with ſmall comfort.

Phil. *It ſeems that this man neither regards the one nor the other: becauſe, for ought that I can ſee, he cares not greatly if the Scriptures were burnt.*

Antil. *Oh, Sirrah, you ſpeak very malepertly; you may ſpeak when you are bidden. Who made you a judge? You are one of his Diſciples, and that maketh you to ſpeak of his ſide.*

Phil. *No Sir, I hope I am Chriſt's Diſciple, and no man's. But aſſuredly I cannot hold my peace at your vile cavilling, and moſt blaſphemous Speeches.*

Antil. *I cry you mercy, Sir, you ſeem to be one of theſe Scripture-men: you are one of the Spirit: you are ſo full of it, that it runneth out at your noſtrils.*

Phil. *You do plainly ſhew your ſelf to be a ſcoffing* Iſmaelite.

Antil. *And you do plainly ſhew your ſelf to be one of the folk of God which know their ſeats in Heaven.*

Phil. *I pray God be merciful unto you, and give you a better heart: for I ſee you are in the gall of bitterneſs, and in the bond of iniquity.*

Antil. *You think there is none good but ſuch as your ſelf, and ſuch as can pleaſe your humour. You will, forſooth, be all pure. But by God there be a company of pure knaves of you.*

Theol. Now you do manifeſtly ſhew of what ſpirit you are. For you both ſwear and rail with one breath.

Antil. *God forgive me. Why did he anger me then? There be a company of ſuch controllers as he in the world, that no body can be quiet for them.*

Theol. I perceive a little thing will anger you, ſith you be angry with him for ſpeaking the truth.

Antil. *What hath he to do with me? He is more buſie than needs. Why doth he ſay I am in a bad caſe? I will not come to him to learn my duty. If I have faults, he ſhall not anſwer for them. I ſhall anſwer for mine own faults, and every fat ſhall ſtand on his own bottom. Let him meddle with that he hath to do withal.*

Theol.

Theol. You are too impatient: you take matters at the worſt. We ought friendly, and in love, to admoniſh one another: for we muſt have a care one of anothers ſalvation. I dare ſay for him, that he ſpeaks both out of love and compaſſion towards you.

Antil. I *care not for ſuch love. Let him keep it to himſelf. What doth he think of me? doth he ſuppoſe that I have not a ſoul to ſave as well as he? or that I have no care of my ſalvation? I would he ſhould know, that I have as great care of my ſalvation as he, though I make not ſuch outward ſhews: for all is not gold that gliſters; I have as good a meaning as he, though I cannot utter it.*

Theol. Theſe words might well be ſpared; I hope you will be pacified, and amend your life, and draw near to God hereafter.

Antil. *Truly, Sir, you may think of me what you pleaſe; but I aſſure you, I have more care that way, than all the world wonders at: I thank God for it, I ſay my prayers every night when I am in my bed; and if good prayers will do us no good, God help us. I have alwaies ſerved God duly and truly, and had him in my mind, I do as I would be done to. I keep my Church, and tend my prayers while I am there; and I hope I am not ſo bad as this fellow would make me. I am ſure if I be bad, I I am not the worſt in the world, there be as bad as I. If I go to Hell, I ſhall have fellows, and make as good ſhift as others.*

Theol. You think you have ſpoken wiſely, but I like not your anſwer. For your words ſmell ſtrongly both of ignorance, pride and unbelief. For firſt, you juſtifie your ſelf in your faithleſs and ignorant worſhip of God. And ſecondly, you juſtifie your ſelf by compariſon with others, becauſe others are as bad as you, and you are not the worſt in the world.

Antil. *Now I know you ſpeak of ill will: for you never had a good opinion of me.*

Theol. I would I could have as good an opinion of you as I do deſire, and that I might ſee that wrought in you, which might draw my love and liking towards you. And as for ill will, the Lord knoweth I bear

you

you none. I desire your conversion and salvation with my whole heart, and I would think my self happy if I might save your soul with the loss of my right arm.

Antil. I *hope* I *may repent. For the Scripture saith, At what time soever a sinner doth repent, God will have mercy on him. Therefore if* I *may have space and grace, and time to repent before death, and ask God forgiveness, and say my prayers, and cry God mercy,* I *hope* I *shall do well enough.*

Theol. You speak as though repentance were in your power, and at your commandment; and that you can put it into your own hearts when you list; and that makes you, and many others presume of it three hours before death. But you must know, that repentance is the rare gift of GOD, and it is given but to a few. For God will know him well, that he bestoweth repentance upon; sith it is proper only to the Elect. It is no worldly matter. It is not attained without many and frequent prayers, and much hearing, reading, and meditating in the word of God. It is not so easie a matter to come by as the world judgeth; it is not found but of them that seek it diligently, and beg it earnestly. It is no ordinary three hours matter. Cry God mercy a little for fashion will not do it. Cursory saying of a few prayers a little before death, availeth not. For though true Repentance be never too late, yet late repentance is seldom true. Herein delays are dangerous: for the longer we defer it, the worse is our case. The farther a nail is driven in with a hammer, the harder it is to get out again. The longer a Disease is let run, the harder it is to cure. The deeper a tree is rooted, the harder it is to pluck up again. The longer we defer the time of our repentance, the harder it will be to repent. And therefore it is dangerous driving it off to the last cast. For an ancient Father saith, [Augustine] *We read but of one that repented at the last, that no man should presume; and yet of one, that none might despair.*

Well

Well then, to conclude this point; I would have you to know that the preſent time is always the time of Repentance: For time paſt cannot be recovered, and time to come is uncertain.

Antil. *Sir in my opinion you have uttered ſome very dangerous things, and ſuch as were enough to drive a man to deſpair.*

Theol. What be they, I pray you?

Antil. *There be divers things. But one thing doth moſt of all ſtick in my ſtomack, and that is the ſmall number that ſhall be ſaved, as you ſay. But I can hardly be perſwaded that God made ſo many thouſands to caſt them away when he had done. Do you think that God hath made us to condemn us? Will you make him to be the Author of condemnation.*

Theol. Nothing leſs. For God is not the cauſe of mens condemnation, but themſelves. For every men's deſtruction cometh of himſelf: as it is written, (*Hoſ.* 13. 9.) *O Iſrael thy deſtruction is of thy ſelf,* As for God, he doth (in great mercy uſe all poſſible means to ſave ſouls, as he ſaith by the Prophet, (*Eſa.* 5. 4.) *What could I have done more to my Vineyard that I have not done unto it?* But to come near to your queſtion: I deny that God hath created the moſt part of men only and ſolely unto perdition, as the proper end which he did aim at in creating them, but he hath created all things for the praiſe of his glory: as it is written, *He hath created all things for himſelf, and the wicked alſo for the evil day.* (*Prov.* 16. 4.) then it followeth, that the cauſe, and end why the wicked were created, neither was nor is the only deſtruction of his creature, but his own praiſe and glory: that that only might appear and ſhine forth in all his works. Yet certain it is, that God for juſt cauſes (albeit unknown and hid to us) hath rejected a great part of men: The cauſes, I ſay, of reprobation are hid in the eternal counſel of GOD and known to his godly wiſdom only. They are ſecret, and hid from us, reſerved in his eternal wiſdom to be revealed at the glorious appearing of our Lord Jeſus. (*Rom.* 11. 33.)

His

His judgments (ſaith the Scripture) *are as a great deep, and his waies paſt finding out.* It is as poſſible for us to comprehend the Ocean in a little diſh, as to comprehend the reaſon of God's counſel in this behalf. (*Pſal. 36. 6.*)

Antil. *What reaſon, juſtice, or equity is there that ſentence of death ſhould be paſſed upon men before they be born, and before they have done good or evil.*

Theol. I told you before, that we can never comprehend the reaſon of *God*'s proceeding in this behalf, ye muſt know, that his will is the rule of righteouſneſs, and muſt be unto us inſtead of a thouſand reaſons. For whatſoever God willeth, in as much as he willeth it, it is to be holden juſt, we cannot conceive the reaſon of many natural things, and things ſubject to ſenſe, as the motion of the celeſtial bodies; their unconceivable ſwiftneſs, their matter and ſubſtance, their magnitude, altitude and latitude. We cannot throughly find out the cauſes of the thunder, lightnings, winds, earth-quakes, ebbings and flowings of the Sea, and many other things under the Sun, how then can we poſſibly aſcend up into the Privy Chamber and Councel-houſe of God, to ſift and ſearch out the bottom of God's ſecrets, which no wit or reach of man can any way attain unto? Let us therefore learn in GOD'S ſear to reverence that which we cannot in this life comprehend. This one thing I muſt ſay unto you, that whatſoever God decreeth, yet doth he execute no man till he hath ten thouſand times deſerved it. For betwixt the decree and the execution thereof, cometh ſin in us, and moſt juſt cauſes of condemnation.

Antil. *If God had decreed mens deſtruction, what can they do withal? Who can reſiſt his will? why then is he angry with us? For all things muſt needs come to paſs according to his decree and determination.*

Theol. Firſt, I *anſwer you with the Apoſtle.* (*Rom. 9. 20.*) *O man, who art thou that pleadeſt againſt God? Shall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, Why haſt thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power over*

the

the clay, to make of the ſame lump, one veſſel to honour, and another to diſhonour? Moreover, I anſwer, that God's decree doth not enforce the will of man, which worketh and moveth of it ſelf. It hath in it ſelf the beginning of evil motion, and ſinneth willingly. Therefore though the decree of God impoſeth a neceſſity upon all ſecundary cauſes; (ſo as they muſt needs be framed and diſpoſed according tothe ſame) yet no co-action or conſtraint, for they are all carryed with their voluntary motion. Even as we ſee the plumb of a clock, being the firſt mover, doth cauſe all the other wheels to move, but not to move this way or that way; for in that they move ſome one way, and ſome another, it is of themſelves: I mean, of their own frame: ſo God's decree doth move all ſecondary cauſes, but takes not away their own proper motion. For God is the Author of every action, but not of any evil in any action. As the Soul of man is the original cauſe of all motion in man, as the Philoſophers diſpute, but yet not of lame and impotent motion, for that is from another cauſe, to wit, ſome defect in the body. So, I ſay, God's decree is the root and firſt cauſe of motion, but not of defective motion, that is from our ſelves. Likewiſe, that a bell ſoundeth, the cauſe is in him that ringeth it; but that it jarreth, the cauſe is in it ſelf. Again, that an inſtrument ſoundeth, is in him that playeth upon it; but that it jarreth, is in it ſelf; that is, in its own want of tuning. So then to ſhut up this point; all Inſtruments and middle cauſes are ſo moved of God, being the firſt mover, that he always doth well, holily, and juſtly in his moving. But the inſtruments moved are carryed in contrary motions, according to their own nature and frame: If they be good, they are carryed to that which is good: but if they be evil, they are carryed unto evil. So that according to the double beginning of motion and will, there is a double and divers work and effect.

Antil.

Antil. *But from whence comes it that man of himself, that is, of his own free motion, doth will that which is evil?*

Theol. From the fall of *Adam*, whereby his will was corrupted.

Antil. *What was the cause of Adams fall?*

Theol. The Devil, and the depravation of his own will.

Antil. *How could his will incline unto evil, it being made good, and he being made good?*

Theol. He and his will were made good, yet mutably good. For to be immutably good, is proper onely to God. And *Adam* did so stand, that he might fall; as the event declared.

Antil. *Was not the decree of God the cause of* Adams *fall?*

Theol. No; but the voluntary inclination of his will unto evil. For *Adam's* will was neither forced, nor by any violence of Gods purpose, compelled to consent; but he of a free will and ready mind left God, and joyned with the Devil.

Thus then I do determine, That *Adam* sinned necessarily, if you respect the decree or event: but if you respect the first mover and inherent cause, which was his own will, then he sinned voluntarily and contingently. For the decree of God did not take away his will, or the contingency thereof, but onely order and dispose it. Therefore (as a learned Writer saith) *Volens peccavit, & proprio moeu*; [Beza] *He sinned willingly and of his own motion.*

And therefore no evil is to be attributed unto God, or his decree.

Antil. *How then do you conceive and consider of the purpose of God in all these things?*

Theol. Thus: that God decreed with himself, and *uno actu*, at once, That there should be a world: That *Adam* should be created perfect: That he should fall of himself: That all should fall with him: That he would save some of the lost race; That he would do it of mercy through his Son: That he would condemn others for sin.

Antil.

Antil. *How do you prove the decree of reprobation; to wit, that God hath determined the deſtruction of thouſands before the world was?*

Theol. The Scripture calleth the Reprobates, *The veſſels of wrath prepared to deſtruction*; *Rom.*9.22. The Scripture ſaith, *God hath not appointed us unto wrath*: 1 *Theſ.* 5. 9. Therefore it followeth that ſome are appointed unto wrath. The Scripture ſaith of the Reprobates, *that they were even ordained to ſtumble at the Word*, (1 *Pet.* 2. 8.) The Scripture ſaith, *They were of old ordained to this condemnation*, Jude 4.

Antil. *But how anſwer you this? God wills not the death of a ſinner; therefore he hath predeſtinated none to deſtruction*, Ezek. 18.32.

Theol. God wills not the death of a ſinner ſimply and abſolutely, as it is the deſtruction of his creature; but as it is a means to declare his juſtice, and to ſet forth his glory.

Antil. *God did fore-ſee and fore-know that the wicked would periſh through their own ſin: but yet he did not predeſtinate them unto it.*

Theol. Gods pre-ſcience and fore-knowledge cannot be ſeparated from his decree. For whatſoever God hath fore-ſeen and fore-known in his eternal counſel, he hath determined the ſame ſhall come to paſs. For as it it appertains to his wiſdom to fore-know and fore-ſee all things: ſo doth it appertain to his power to moderate and rule all things according to his will.

Antil. *What do you call preſcience in God?*

Theol. Preſcience in God is that whereby all things abide preſent before his eyes: ſo that to his eternal knowledge, nothing is paſt, nothing to come; but all things are alwaies preſent: and they are ſo preſent, that they are not as conceived imaginations, forms and motions; but all things are alwaies ſo preſent before God, that he doth behold them in their veriry and perfection.

Antil. *How can God juſtly determine of mens deſtruction, before they have ſinned?*

Theol. This objection hath been anſwered in part before.

before: for I told you, that God condemneth none but for ſin, either original onely, or elſe, both original and actual. For howſoever he doth in himſelf, before all time, determine the reprobation of many, yet he proceeds to no execution till there be found in us both juſt deſerts, and apparent cauſe. Therefore they deal unſoundly and fooliſhly, which confound the decree of reprobation with damnation it ſelf; ſith ſin is the cauſe of the one, and onely the will of God of the other.

Phil. *Well, ſir, ſith we are ſo far proceeded in this queſtion, by the occaſion of this mans objections and cavils, I pray you now, as you have ſpoken much of Reprobation, and the cauſes thereof; ſo let us hear ſomewhat of Election, and the cauſes thereof; and ſhew us out of the Scriptures, that God hath before all worlds choſen ſome to eternal life.*

Theol. Touching the decree of Election, there are almoſt none that make any doubt thereof: therefore ſmall proof ſhall ſerve for this point. Onely I will confirm it by one or two teſtimonies out of Holy Scripture. Firſt, the Apoſtle ſaith, (*Eph.* 1. 3,4.) *Bleſſed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual Bleſſings, in Heavenly things in* CHRIST, *as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love.* You ſee the words are very plain and pregnant for this purpoſe. Another confirmation was taken out of the eight Chapter to the *Romans*, in theſe words: *Thoſe whom he knew before, did he alſo predeſtinate to be like to the image of his own Son, that he might be the firſt-born of many brethren.*

Phil. *Which be the cauſes of Election?*

Theol. The cauſes of Election are to be found onely in God himſelf. For his eternal Election dependeth neither upon man, neither yet upon any thing that is in man, but is purpoſed in himſelf, and eſtabliſhed in Chriſt, in whom we are Elected. This is fully proved in theſe words: (*Eph.* 1. 5, 6.) *Who hath predeſtinated us to be adopted through Jeſus Chriſt in himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will, to the praiſe of his glory, wherewith he hath made us freely accepted in his beloved.*

Where

Where we ſee the Apoſtle telleth us, that his free grace, and the good pleaſure of his will, are the firſt motives or moving cauſe of our Election.

Phil. *But the Papiſts fetch the firſt motive of Election out of mans merits, and foreſeen works. For, ſay they, God did fore-ſee who would repent, believe, and do well; and therefore he made choice of them.*

Theol. But they are greatly deceived: For I ſay again and again, that there is nothing in us which did ever move God to ſet his love upon us, and to chuſe us unto life: (*Deut.* 7. 7.) but he ever found the original cauſe in himſelf: as it is written, *He will have mercy, upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.* And again, *It is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth: but in God that ſheweth mercy.* The Lord himſelf alſo teſtifieth, that he did chooſe his people not for any reſpect in them, but only becauſe he loved them, and bare a ſpecial favour unto them. So then it is a certain truth, that Gods eternal predeſtination, excludeth all merits of man, and all power of his will, thereby to attain unto eternal life: and that his free mercy, and undeſerved favor is both the beginning, the midſt, and the end of our ſalvation: that is to ſay, All is of him, and nothing of our ſelves.

Phil. *Whether then doth faith depend upon Election, or Election upon faith? That is, whether did God chooſe us, becauſe we do believe? or whether do we believe, becauſe we are choſen?*

Theol. Out of all doubt, both faith and all the fruits of faith do depend upon Election, For therefore we believe, becauſe we are Elected; and not therefore Elected, becauſe we believe; As it is written (*Act.* 13. 48.) *So many as were ordained to everlaſting life, believed?*

Antil. *If men be predeſtinated before they be born, to what purpoſe ſerve all precepts, admonitions, laws, &c. It forceth not how we live. For neither our godly or ungodly life can alter the purpoſe of God.*

Theol. This is a very wicked and carnal objection, and ſheweth a vile and diſſolute mind in them that uſe it.

it. But I could wiſh ſuch men to conſider the end of Election, which is that we ſhould lead a godly life: as it is plainly ſet down in the firſt chapter to the *Epheſians, ver.*4. where the Apoſtle ſaith, *God hath choſen us before the foundation of the world.* But to what end? that we ſhould live as we liſt? No, no, ſaith he; *But that we ſhould be holy and unblamable before him.* Again, he ſaith, (*Rom.*8.29.) *We are predeſtinated to be made like the image of his Son*, that is, *to be holy and righteous.* For moſt certain it is, that we can judge nothing of predeſtination, but by the conſequences; that is, by our calling, juſtification, and ſanctification. For when once we feel the work of grace within us, that is, that we are waſhed by the new birth, and renewed by the Holy Ghoſt, finding in our ſelves an unfeigned hatred of ſin, and love of righteouſneſs) then are we ſure, and out of all doubt, that we are predeſtinated to life, And it is even as much as if GOD had perſonally appeared unto us, and whiſpered us in the ear, and told us that our names are taken, and written in the Book of Life. For *whom he hath predeſtinated, them he hath called: and whom he hath called, them he hath juſtified; and whom he hath juſtified, them he hath glorified, Rom.*8.30. Now therefore till we feel theſe marks of Election wrought in us, we can be at no certainty in this point; neither are we to take any notice of it, or to meddle in it: but we muſt ſtrive, according to that power and faculty we have, to live honeſtly and civilly, waiting when GOD will have mercy on us, and give us the true touch. As for them that are careleſs and diſſolute, ſetting all at ſix and ſeven, there is ſmall hope that they are elected, or ever ſhall be called.

Antil. *I think the preaching and publiſhing of this doctrine of predeſtination, hath done much hurt: and it had been good it had never been known to the people, but utterly concealed. For ſome it driveth to deſpair, and others it maketh more ſecure and careleſs.*

Theol. You are in a great errour: for this doctrine is part of God's revealed truth, which he would have known

known to his people: And in good ſooth, it is of very great and comfortable uſe to the children of God, againſt all the aſſaults of the Devil, and temptations of deſperation whatſoever. For when a man hath once in truth felt by the effects, that God hath choſen him to life, then though the Devil lye ſore at him, and the conſcience of ſin and his own frailties do vehemently aſſault him; yet he knoweth certainly that the eternal purpoſe and counſel of God is immutable, and that becauſe his ſalvation is not grounded upon himſelf, or his own ſtrength, but upon the unchangeable decree of God, which is a foundation immoveable, and alwaies ſtanding ſure and firm: therefore do the Devil and ſin what they can, yet he ſhall be upheld in righteouſneſs and truth, and even (as it were) born up in the arms of God even to the end. For whom God loveth, to the end he loveth them. Moreover, when once the Lord's people perceive (by their ſanctification and new birth) both that the Lord hath rejected and reprobated ſo many thouſand thouſands, and made choice of them to be Heirs of his moſt glorious Kingdom, being in themſelves of the ſame mould and making that others are, and that he hath done all this of his free grace and undeſerved mercy towards them: Oh how doth it raviſh their hearts with the love of him! Again, how frankly and chearfully do they ſerve him! how willingly and faithfully do they obey him! Yea, how are they wholly wrapt and enflamed with the deſire of him! For it is the perſwaſion and feeling of God's love towards us, that draweth up our love to him again: as S. *John* ſaith, (1 *Joh.* 4.) *We love him, becauſe he hath loved us firſt.*

Moreover, it is ſaid of *Mary Magdalen*, (*Luk.* 7. 47.) that ſhe loved much, becauſe much was forgiven, for after ſhe felt her many and great ſins freely pardoned, her affections were kindled with the love and obedience of Chriſt. So likewiſe the Church in the *Canticles*, (*Cant.* 2. 5.) after ſhe had been in the banqueting houſe of all ſpiritual grace, and felt the

the banner of Chriſt's love diſplayed upon her, forthwith ſhe was wrapt therewith, and cryed out (as it were in a ſwound) that ſhe was ſick of love. So again, (*Cant.* 5. 4.) when Chriſt put in his hand by the hole of the door (that is, touched the very inward parts of her heart by his ſpirit) then her heart yerned, and her bowels were affectioned towards him. This is it which St. *Paul* prayed for upon his knees, that it may be granted to the *Epheſians*, (*Eph.* 3. 18, 19.) that they may be able to comprehend with all the Saints, what is the breadth and length, height, and depth of God's love toward us, and to know the love of Chriſt, (which paſſeth knowledge) and to be filled with all fulneſs of God. Thus then you ſee the great and comfortable uſe of this doctrine of election, both in that it miniſtreth ſtrength and comfort againſt all temptations, as alſo becauſe it conſtraineth us to love GOD, and of very love to fear him, and obey him.

Phil. *Well, Sir, I think now you have ſpent time enough in anſwering the objections and cavils of* Antilegon. *In all which I do obſerve one thing, that there is no end of cavilling and objecting againſt the truth: and that a man may object more in an hour, than a learned man can well anſwer in a day.*

Theol. You ſay truth. And the reaſon hereof is, becauſe men have ſin in them out of meaſure, and the Spirit of God but in meaſure. Therefore they can by the one, object and conceive more againſt the truth, than by the other they ſhall be able to anſwer and ſay for it.

Phil. *It appeareth indeed, that errors be infinite, and objections innumerable, and that there is no end of mens cavilling againſt God's ſacred truth. It is good for us therefore to be thorowly ſetled in the truth, that we be not intangled, or ſnared with any cavils, or ſophiſtications whatſoever. And I do verily think (notwithſtanding all his objections and exceptions) that he doth in his conſcience deſire, with* Balaam, *to dye the death of the Righteous, and to be as one of them whom he ſeeketh to deſpiſe.*

Theol.

Theol. I am ſo perſwaded too. For this is the triumph that vertue hath over vice, that where ſhe is moſt hated, there ſhe is often deſired and wiſhed for. And this is the great puniſhment that God bringeth upon the wicked; *Virtutem ut videant intabeſcantquè relicta*, as ſaith the Poet; *That they ſhall ſee vertue, and pine away, having no power to follow it.*

Phil. *But now let us return to the point we were in hand with, before we fell into theſe Objections and cavils: which was, concerning the ſmall number that ſhall be ſaved: and as you have ſhewed us many reaſons thereof, ſo proceed to ſpeak yet more unto that point.*

Theol. As I have ſhewed you of ſundry lets, both within us and without us, which do keep us back from God, and hold us faſt in our ſins; ſo now, unto all that hath been ſaid before, I will add nine great hinderances unto eternal life, which may not unfitly be termed nine bars out of Heaven, and nine gates into Hell.

Phil. *Which be they?*

Theol. They be theſe.

Infidelity, Preſumption of God's mercy: Examples of the multitude: Long cuſtom of ſin: Long eſcaping of puniſhment, Hope of long life: conceitedneſs: Ill Company: Evil examples of Miniſters.

Phil. *Theſe indeed be ſtrong bars out of Heaven, and wide gates into Hell. I pray you therefore prove them out of the Scriptures, and lay them forth ſomewhat more largely.*

Theol. The firſt, which is infidelity, is proved out of the fourth chapter to the *Hebrews*, *verſe* 2 where it is written, *Unto us was the Goſpel preached, as unto them: but the word which they heard, profited them not, becauſe it was not mixed with faith in thoſe that heard it.* And again, *They could not enter in, becauſe of unbelief.* (*Heb.* 3. 19.) Here we ſee that unbelief did bar out the old people from entring into the Land of Promiſe, which was a figure of God's eternal Kingdom. And ſure it is, that the ſame unbelief doth bar out thouſands of us. For many will believe nothing but their own fantaſies.

fantaſies. They will not believe the Word of God: eſpecially when it is contrary to their luſts and likings, profits and pleaſure. Though things be manifeſtly proved to their faces, and both the chapter and the verſe ſhewed them, yet will they not believe; or though they ſay they believe, yet will they never go about the practiſe of any thing, but reply againſt *God* in all their actions. And for the moſt part, when God ſaith one thing, they will ſay another: when God ſaith Yea, they will ſay Nay, and ſo give God the lye. Some again will ſay, *If all be true that the Preachers ſay, then God help us.* Thus you ſee how infidelity doth bar men out of Heaven, and caſt them into Hell.

Phil. *Let us hear of the ſecond gate, which is, Preſumption of God's mercy.*

Theol. This is ſet down in the 29 chapter of *Deuteronomy*, where the Lord ſaith thus: *When a man heareth the words of this curſe, and yet flattereth himſelf in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, although I walk according to the ſtubbornneſs of mine own heart, thus adding drunkenneſs to thirſt, (that is, one ſin to another) the Lord will not be merciful unto him, but the wrath of the Lord, and his jealouſie, ſhall ſmoak againſt that man, and every curſe that is written in this book, ſhall light upon him, and the Lord ſhall put out his name from under Heaven.*

Here we ſee how the mighty God doth thunder down upon ſuch as go on in their ſins, preſuming of his mercy, ſaying in their hearts, If I may have but a *Lord have mercy upon me* three hours before death, I care not. But it is juſt with God when theſe three hours come, to ſhut them up in blindneſs, and hardneſs of heart, as a juſt plague for their preſumption Therefore the Prophet *David*, ſeeing the grievouſneſs of this ſin, prayeth to be delivered from it: *Keep me O Lord*, (ſaith he) *(Pſal. 19. 13.) from preſumptuous ſins, let them not reign over me.* Let all men therefore take heed of preſumptuous ſins: for though

though God be full of mercy, yet he will ſhew no mercy to them that preſume on his mercy. But they ſhall once know, to their coſt, that juſtice goeth from him as well as mercy.

Phil. *Let us come to the third gate, which is the Example of the multitude.*

Theol. This is proved in the 23 of *Exodus*, *ver.* 2. where the Lord ſaith flatly, *Thou ſhalt not follow a multitude to do evil.* In another place, the Lord ſaith, *After the doing of the Land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, ſhall ye not do; and after the manner of the Land of Canaan, whether I will bring you, ſhall ye not do, neither walk in their ordinances.* (*Lev.* 18. 3.)

Againſt this Law did the children of *Iſrael* offend, when they ſaid in the ſtubbornneſs of their heart to the Prophet *Jeremy*, *The word that thou haſt ſpoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hear, but we will do whatſoever goeth out of our mouth, and we will do as we have done, both we and our Fathers, our Kings and our Princes, in the Cities of Judah, and the ſtreets of Jeruſalem*, *Jer.* 44. 16.

Note here, how they do altogether refuſe the Word of the Lord, and how they follow the example of the multitude. We ſee in theſe our days by lamentable experience, how thouſands are violently carryed down the ſtream; and for defence of it, ſome will ſay, Do as the moſt men do, and the feweſt will ſpeak ill of you: which is a very wicked ſpeech. For if we will follow the courſe of the moſt, we ſhall have the reward of the moſt, which is eternal perdition. Let us therefore take heed of bending with the ſway: for the ſway of the world doth weigh down all things that can be ſpoken out of the Word of *God*, and openeth a very wide paſſage into Hell.

Phil. *Proceed to the fourth gate into Hell, which is, the long cuſtom of ſin.*

Theol. This is noted by the Prophet *Jeremy* to be a very dangerous thing. For he ſaith, (*Jer.* 13. 23.) *Can the Black-moor change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots? Then may ye alſo do good, which are accuſtomed to*

do evil. Noting thereby, that it is as hard a matter to leave an old cuſtom of ſin, as to waſh a Black-more white, or to change the ſpots of a Leopard, which becauſe they are natural, is moſt impoſſible. So when men through cuſtom have made ſwearing, lying, adultery, and drunkenneſs, (as it were) natural to them, oh how hard it is to leave them! For cuſtom maketh another nature, and taketh away all ſence and feeling of ſin.

Phil. *Let us hear of the fifth gat, which is the long eſcaping of puniſhment.*

Theol. This is avouched by the wiſe man, in theſe words; *Becauſe ſentence againſt an evil work is not executed ſpeedily, therefore the hearts of the children of men are ſet in them to do evil. (Eccl. 8. 11.)* Where he ſheweth, that one cauſe why men are ſo hardned in their ſins, is, becauſe God winketh at them, and letteth them alone, not puniſhing them immediately after they have ſinned, For if God ſhould forthwith ſtrike down one, and rain fire and brimſtone upon another, and cauſe the Earth to ſwallow up a third, then men would fear indeed. But it hath been ſhewed before, that God taketh not that courſe, but though he meet with ſome in this life, yet he lets thouſands eſcape, and that makes them more bold, thinking they ſhall never come to their anſwer; even as an old thief, which hath a long time eſcaped both Priſon and Gallows, thinks he ſhall alwaies ſo eſcape, and therefore goeth boldly on in his thefts. But let men take heed: For as the Proverb ſaith, *Though the Pitcher goeth long to the Well, yet at laſt it cometh broken home:* So though men eſcape long, yet they ſhall not eſcape alwaies, for there will come a day of reckoning, a day that will pay it home for all. Thus you ſee how impunity leadeth numbers to deſtruction: that is, when men are let alone, and neither ſmitten by the hand of God, nor puniſhed by the Law of the Magiſtrate.

Phil. *Let us come to the ſixth gate, which is the Hope of long life.*

Theol.

Theol. This is affirmed by our Saviour concerning that rich man, who when he felt the world come in upon him, with full ſtream, ſaid he would pull down his barns, and build greater, and ſay to his Soul, *Soul, thou haſt much goods laid up for many years, live at eaſe, eat, drink, and take thy paſtime.* (*Luk.* 12. 19.) But our Saviour calls him fool, for flattering himſelf in ſecurity, and promiſing unto himſelf long life. Moreover, he told him that the ſame night he ſhould make a helliſh and miſerable end. Note, I pray you, how Jeſus Chriſt, the fountain of all wiſdom, calleth this man a fool, and yieldeth a reaſon thereof; to wit, becauſe he gathered riches to himſelf, and was not rich in God: he had great care of this life, and none at all for that which is to come. So then it followeth that all ſuch are right fools indeed, and may be chronicled for fools, (how wiſe ſoever they be taken and reputed in the world) which have much care for their bodies, and none for their ſouls; great care for this life, and little for that which is to come. Well, let all ſuch prophane Worldlings as dream and dote of long life, (and therefore defer the day of their repentance and converſion unto God) take heed by this mans example, that they reckon not without their hoſt, and be ſuddenly ſnatch'd away in the midſt of all their pleaſures and jolities; as *Job* ſaith, (*Job* 21. 23, 24.) *Some die in their full ſtrength, being in all eaſe and proſperity. Their breaſts run full of milk, and their bones run full of marrow.* We ſee therefore how dangerous a thing it is for men to flatter and ſooth up themſelves with hope of long life.

Phil. *Proceed to the ſeventh Gate, which is, conceitedneſs.*

Theol. This is indeed a very broad gate into Hell. For the Scripture ſaith, (*Prov.*26.16.) *Seeſt thou a man wiſe in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of ſuch an one.* And again, *The fool is wiſer in his own eyes, than ſeven men that can give a ſenſible reaſon,* (Prov. 26.16.) The Holy Ghoſt we ſee affirmeth, That ſuch

as are puſt up with an overweening of their own gifts; are fartheſt of all other from the Kingdom of heaven. For they deſpiſe the wiſdom of God to their own deſtruction. They hold ſcorn to be taught: they will ſay they know as much as all the Preachers can tell them. For what can all the Preachers ſay more than this? We are all ſinners, we muſt be ſaved by Chriſt, we muſt do as we would be done to. There is no more but to do well, and have well, *&c.* Alas poor ſoule! they look aloft, they are deſperately hoven up with conceitedneſs, not knowing that they are poor naked, blind, and miſerable, *Rev.*3.17.

Theſe men truſt altogether to their own wit, learning, policy, riches, and great reputation in the world. And becauſe all men crouch to them, and clap their hands at them, therefore they ſwell like Turky-Cocks, ſet up their feathers, and draw their wings upon the ground with a kind of ſnuff and diſdain of all men, as if they were the onely wights of the world. Moreover, when men do praiſe them for their natural gifts, ſooth them and applaud them, then it is a wonder to ſee how they ſtreak themſelves, as though they would forthwith take their flight, and mount unto the clouds. But let all inſolent and conceited men hearken unto the wo that is pronounced againſt them by the eternal King of Glory, ſaying, *Wo unto them that are wiſe in their own eyes, and prudent in their own ſight*, *Iſa.*5.21. Again, let them hearken to the counſel of *God*, which ſaith, *Truſt unto the Lord with all thine heart, but lean not unto thine own wiſdom. Be not wiſe in thine own eyes, but fear God and depart from evil.* (Prov. 3.5.) Theſe ſilly conceited fools think, that becauſe they have the caſt of this life, and can cunningly compaſs the things of this World, and go through-ſtitch with them, therefore they can compaſs Heaven alſo by their fine wits, and deep devices: but alas, poor wretches, they are greatly and groſly deceived. For the wiſdom of the world is fooliſhneſs with God, and he catcheth the wiſe in their own craftineſs.

And

And again the Lord ſaith, (1 Cor. 3. 19.) *I will deſtroy the wiſdom of the wiſe, and will caſt away the underſtanding of the prudent.* Let not theſe men therefore ſtand too much in their own light, let them not truſt to their own policies: for they are all but as an Ice of one nights freezing, which, will deceive them that truſt unto it. Let them therefore become fools in themſelves, that God may make them wiſe. Let them deny themſelves, that God may acknowledge them. Let them be humbled in themſelves, that God may exalt them. For aſſuredly there is no uſe after this life, for the moſt exquiſite wiſdom of the fleſh, it endeth all when we end, *(Eccleſ. 2. 16.) For how dyeth the wiſe man? Even as dyeth the fool,* ſaith the Holy Ghoſt. And where all worldly wiſdom endeth, there all heavenly wiſdom beginneth. Thus therefore we ſee what a wide gate into hell Conceitedneſs is, and how many enter in thereat.

Phil. *Now let us underſtand of the eight gate into hell, which is Ill company.*

Theol. The Spirit of God fore-ſeeing the great dangers of this, and knowing how ready we are to be carryed away with ill company, doth give us moſt earneſt warning to take heed of it as a moſt dangerous thing, (Prov. 4. 14, 15.) *Enter not* (ſaith he) in *the way of the wicked, and walk not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, go not by it, turn from it, and paſs by.* The reaſon hereof is yielded in another place, where it is ſaid, *A companion of fools ſhall be made worſe,* (*Prov.* 13. 20.) Let men therefore take heed of ill company; for many thereby have been brought to the Gallows, and have confeſſed upon the Ladder, that ill company hath brought them unto it, and therefore have admoniſhed all by their example to take heed and beware of lewd company.

Moreover, the Scripture ſaith. *He that followeth vain companions, ſhall be filled with poverty, Prov.* 28. 19. And again in the ſame chapter, *He that keepeth company with banqueters, ſhameth his father.* Let us therefore ſay with *David, I am a companion of all them that*

fear God, and keep his Commandments, (Pſal. 119. 63.) And on the contrary, let us ſay with him, *I have not haunted with vain perſons, neither kept company with diſſemblers. I hate the aſſembly of the evil, and have not accompanied with the wicked, (Pſal.*26.4,5.) Let us therefore by *Davids* example ſhun the company of the wicked: for as a man is, ſo is his company. It is the ſureſt note to diſcern a man by. For as all unlike things are unſociable, ſo all like things are ſociable. Herein let us beware we deceive not our ſelves with vain words, and an opinion of our ſtrength, as if we were as ſtrong as Chriſt, and could not be drawn away with any company. No, no: we are more apt to be drawn than to draw; to be drawn to evil by others, than to draw others to good: therefore God ſaith by his Prophet, *Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them, (Jer.*15.19.) Undoubtedly he is an odd man that is not made worſe with ill company. For can a man touch pitch and not be defiled therewith? Can a man carry coals in his boſom, and not be burnt? Daily and lamentable experience ſheweth, that many of them which think themſelves ſtrong, are this way moſt grievouſly ſmutted. Let a man think therefore he never abandoneth evil, till he abandon ill company. For no good is concluded in this Parliament. For ill company is the ſuburbs of Hell.

Furthermore, it is to be obſerved, that ſome upon admonitions, and ſome inward compunctions of their own conſcience, do leave their ſins until they have new provocations, and until they come among their old copes-mates and ſinful companions, and then are they carryed back again to their old byas, and return to their folly, as a dog returneth to his vomit. For we ſee ſome; which otherwiſe are of good natures and diſpoſitions, moſt pitifully and violently carryed away with ill company. For even as green wood of it ſelf is unapt to burn, yet being laid on the fire, with a great deal of ſeare wood, it burneth as faſt as the reſt: (*Prov.*26.21.) So many toward youths, which of themſelves are not ſo prone unto evil as others, yet with this

this violent ſtream and bluſtering tempeſt of ill company are carryed away.

Phil. *Let us come to the laſt gate, which is, the Evil examples of Miniſters.*

Theol. It grieveth me, and I am almoſt aſhamed to ſpeak of this point: for is it not a woful and lamentable thing that any ſuch ſhould be found amongſt the ſons of *Levi?* Is it not a curſe, that the Miniſters of Chriſt ſhould be of a ſcandalous converſation? For if the eye be dark, how great is the darkneſs? If they be examples of all evil to the flock, which ſhould be patterns, lights and examples of all goodneſs, muſt it not needs ſtrengthen the hands of the wicked, ſo as they cannot return from their wickedneſs? But this is an old diſeaſe and evil ſickneſs, which hath alwaies been in the Church. The Prophet *Jeremy* doth moſt grievouſly complain of it in his time, and ſaith, That *from the Prophets of Jeruſalem is wickedneſs gone forth into all the Land. For both the Prophet and the Prieſt do wickedly.* (*Jer.* 23. 14.) *I have ſeen* (ſaith he) *in the Prophets of Jeruſalem, filthineſs. They commit adultery, and walk in lyes: they ſtrengthen alſo the hands of the wicked, that none can return from his wickedneſs: they are all unto me as Sodom, and the Inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah:* And in the ninth verſe of the ſame chapter he ſheweth, that it was no pleaſure or joy unto him ſo publickly to reprove them; but that he did it with exceeding grief, as being forced thereunto, both in regard of God's glory, and the good of the Church. His words are theſe: *Mine heart breaketh within me, becauſe of the Prophets, and all my bones ſhake.* Moreover, in the ſame Chapter is ſet down how the Lord would feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall, and ſundry other wayes plague them for their flatteries, ſeducements, corrupt doctrine, and evil example of life.

Phil. *Moſt certain it is, that the evil example of Miniſters, and eſpecially of Preachers, is very dangerous and offenſive; for thereby thouſands are hardned in their ſins. For men will ſay, Such a Miniſter, and ſuch a Preacher doth*

thus and thus, and therefore why may not we do ſo too? They are learned, and know the Word of God, therefore if it were evil, I hope they would not do it: for they ſhould be lights unto us, and give us good examples. Therefore ſith they do ſuch things, we cannot tell what to think, or what to ſay to the matter: They bring ſuch ſimple folks as we are into a mammering.

Theol. Oh that I could with the Prophet *Jeremy*, quake and ſhake to think of theſe matters! Oh that I could mourn as a Dove in penning of it! Oh that I had in the wilderneſs a cottage, and could with *Job* be a brother to the Dragons, and a companion to the Oſtridges, whilſt I have any thoughts of theſe things! Oh that I could weep and mourn without ſin, before I yield you an anſwer! For weep indeed I may, but anſwer I cannot. Alas (with much grief I ſpeak it) all is too true that you ſay, and herein the people have a vantage againſt us, if I may call it a vantage. But let this be my anſwer: *If the blind lead the blind, both ſhall fall into the ditch.* (*Mat.* 15. 14.) Blind guides, and blind people ſhall periſh together. If becauſe we are wicked, they will be more wicked, then both they and we ſhall burn in Hell-fire together. Then let them reckon their gains, and ſee what they have got. They have ſmall cauſe to triumph over us, for thereby their Market is never a whit amended. Let them take this for anſwer. And let us that are the Miniſters of Chriſt, and Preachers of the Goſpel, look narrowly to our ſelves, and make ſtreight ſteps to our feet: for if we tread never ſo little awry, we may ſee how many eyes are upon us. Let us therefore with *David* pray continually, *Order my goings, O Lord, that my foot-ſteps ſlip not: for when my foot ſlipped, they rejoyced againſt me.* And as for the people, let them follow the examples of thoſe which walk unblamably, (as God be thanked ſome ſuch there be) and let them flee the examples of ſuch as are offenſive. So ſhall God have more glory, and they more peace in their own hearts. Thus have we heard what a wide gate

is

is opened into Hell, by the evil examples of Miniſters, and eſpecially of Preachers.

Phil. *Well, ſith there be ſo many bars out of Heaven, and ſo many gates into Hell, it is a very hard matter to break thorow all theſe bars, and to enter into life; and as hard a matter to miſs all theſe gates, and to eſcape Hell. He quits him well that can do it.*

Theol. True indeed. And as hard a thing as that is, ſo hard a thing is it for fleſh and blood to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. And yet moſt men make light of it, and think it is the eaſieſt matter of an hundred.

Aſun. *As hard as it is, yet I hope by the grace of God I ſhall be one of them that ſhall enter in. For ſo long as I do as I would be done to, and ſay no body no harm, nor do no body no harm; God will have mercy on my ſoul. And I doubt not but my good deeds ſhall weigh againſt my evil deeds, and that I ſhall make even with God at my latter end. For I thank God for it, I have alwaies lived in his fear, and ſerved him with a true intent: Therefore I know that ſo long as I keep his commandments, and live as my neighbours do, and as a Chriſtian man ought to do, he will not damn my ſoul.*

Theol. Can you then keep God's Commandments?

Aſun. *As near as God will give me grace.*

Theol. Nay, but I ask you whether you keep them or no?

Aſun. *I do aſſay to keep them as near as I can: I do my true intent. Though I keep them not all, yet I am ſure I keep ſome of them.*

Theol. Becauſe you ſay you keep ſome of them, I pray you let me be ſo bold with you, as to examine you in the particulars. You know the firſt Commandment is this: *Thou ſhalt have none other Gods in my ſight.* How ſay you, do you keep this?

Aſun. *I am out of all fear of it. For I never worſhipped any God but one. I am fully perſwaded there is but one God.*

Theol. What ſay you then to the ſecond Commandment? *Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf any graven image,* &c.

Aſun. I *never worſhipped any Images in my life, I deſie them, I know they cannot help me, for they be but ſtocks and ſtones.*

Theol. What ſay you to the third Commandment? which is this, *Thou ſhalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*, &c.

Aſun. *Nay certainly, I was never counted a ſwearer in my life, but I have ſerved God alwaies from a child, and have had a good faith in him, ever ſince I could remember, I would be ſorry elſe.*

Theol. What ſay you then to the fourth Commandment? *Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day*, &c.

Aſun. *Nay, for that matter I keep my Church as well as any man in the Pariſh where I dwell, and mind my prayers as well when I am there. I thank God for it, (though I ſay it my ſelf) I have been always well given, and have loved God's Word with all my heart; and it doth me good to hear the Epiſtles and Goſpels read every Sunday by our Vicar.*

Theol. Tell me what you ſay to the fifth Commandment? which is, *Honour thy Father, and thy Mother*, &c. Do you keep this?

Aſun. *I have alwaies loved and obeyed my father and mother from my heart. I hope there is no body can accuſe me for that: and I am ſure if I keep any Commandment, it is this. For when I was a boy, every body ſaid that I was well given, and a toward child. Therefore if I ſhould not keep this Commandment, it would be a great grief unto me, and go as near my heart, as any thing that came to me this ſeven years.*

Theol. VVhat ſay you to the ſixth Commandment? *Thou ſhalt not kill.*

Aſun. *It were ſtrange if I ſhould not keep that.*

Theol. VVhat ſay you to the ſeventh? *Thou ſhalt not commit adultery.*

Aſun. *I thank God for it, I was never given to women. God hath alwaies kept me from that; and I hope, will ſo ſtill.*

Theol. VVhat ſay you to the eighth? Thou ſhalt not ſteal.

Aſun.

Aſun. I *am neither Whore-maſter, nor Thief.*

Theol. VVhat ſay you to the ninth? *Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs,* &c

Aſun. I *deſie all witneſs bearing from my heart.*

Theol. VVhat ſay you to the laſt? *Thou ſhalt not covet.*

Aſun. I *thank God for it,* I *never coveted any man's goods but mine own.*

Theol. Now I perceive you are a wonderful man: you can keep all the Commandments. You are like the blind Ruler which ſaid unto Chriſt, *All theſe things have I kept from my youth.* (*Mat.* 19. 20.) I perceive now indeed, that it is no marvel though you make ſo light of Preaching: for you have no need of it. You are whole, you need not the Phyſitian: you feel no miſery, and therefore you care not for mercy. For where miſery is not felt, there mercy is not regarded: but I ſee you need no Saviour.

Aſun. *You ſay not well in that,* I *need a Saviour; and it is my Lord Jeſus that muſt ſave me, for he made me.*

Theol. VVhat need you a Saviour, ſith you are no ſinner?

Aſun. *Yes, believe me,* I *am a ſinner, we are all ſinners: there is no man but he ſinneth.*

Theol. How can you be a ſinner, ſith you keep all the Commandments?

Aſun, *Yes,* I *am a ſinner for all that.*

Theol. Can you both be a ſinner, and be without ſin too? for he that keepeth the Commandments, is without ſin; which thing you ſay you do. But I ſee how the caſe ſtandeth, that a great number of ſuch ignorant and ſottiſh men as you are, will in general ſay you are ſinners, becauſe your conſciences telleth you ſo; but when it cometh to particulars, you know not how you ſin, nor wherein. I pray you therefore let me lead you thorow the Commandments again, and deal with you in particulars, that I may bring you to the ſight of your ſins. How ſay you therefore, Do you upon your knees, every Morning and Evening

give

give GOD thanks for his particular Mercies, and manifold Favours towards you? and do you call much upon him privately, and much alſo with your Family? Anſwer me plainly and ſimply.

Aſun. *I cannot ſay ſo.*

Theol. Then you have broken the firſt commandment, which chargeth us to give God his due worſhip, whereof prayer and thankſgiving are apart. So then, here at the very entrance, you are found guilty. Further, I demand of you whether you never had any by-thoughts in your prayers, and your heart hath not been upon other matters, even then while you were in prayers?

Aſun. *I cannot deny that: For it is a very hard matter to pray without by-thoughts.*

Theol. Then (by your own confeſſion) you have broken the ſecond Commandment, which doth command the right manner of Gods worſhip: that is, that as we muſt worſhip God, ſo we muſt do it in faith, love, zeal, and pure affections. So that here you are guilty alſo; becauſe when you pray, your mind is of other matters, and you do it not in ſincerity and truth. Further, I demand of you whether you did never ſwear by your faith and troth, or by our Lady St. *Mary*, and ſuch other oathes?

Aſun. *Yes, by St. Mary have I; I muſt needs confeſs it.*

Theol. We need no further witneſs, your very anſwer proveth it; for your anſwer is an oath: therefore here alſo are you guilty, becauſe you ſwear by Idols. For I demand of you, whether you did never travel to Fairs on the Sabbath day, or make bargains on that day, or take iourneys, or talk of worldly matters, neglecting holy duties.

Aſun. *Yes, God forgive me, I have.*

Theol. Then are you guilty of the breach of the fourth Commandment, which chargeth us on pain of death to ſpend the Sabbath day in holy and religious duties, both publickly and privately. Further, I demand whether you inſtruct your wife, children and

ſervants

ſervants in the true knowledge of God, and pray with them or no?

Aſun. *I am ſure you would have me ſpeak the truth.* I *muſt needs confeſs, I do not, neither am I able to do it.*

Theol. Then are you guilty of the breach of the fifth Commandment, which commandeth all duties of ſuperiours, towards their inferiours, and of inferiours towards their ſuperiours, whereof prayers and inſtructions are a part. Moreover, I demand whether you were ever angry or no?

Aſun. *Yes, an hundred times in my daies: and I think there is no body but will be angry at one time or other, eſpecially when they have cauſe.*

Theol. Then you have broken the ſixth Commandment, which chargeth us to avoid wrath, anger, malice, deſire of revenge, and all ſuch like fore-runners unto murder. Furthermore, I ask you, whether you did never look upon a woman with a luſt in your heart?

Aſun. *Yes, for* I *think there is no man free from thoughts that way.* I *had thought, thoughts had been free.*

Theol. No: thoughts are not free before God; for God knoweth our thoughts, and will puniſh us, arraign us, and condemn us for thoughts. Men know not thoughts, and therefore can make no Laws againſt thoughts; but becauſe God is privy to all our moſt ſecret thoughts, therefore he hath made Laws againſt them, and will condemn them. Therefore I conclude, that if you have nouriſhed adulterous thoughts in your heart, you are guilty of the breach of the ſeventh Commandment, which forbiddeth all ſecret thoughts and provocations whatſoever to adultery. But Further, I demand whether you did never pilfer, purloin, and ſteal ſome ſmall things from your neighbour: as paſture, poultry, conies, apples, and ſuch like?

Aſun. I *cannot clear my ſelf in theſe things: for* I *had thought they had been no ſin.*

Theol. Then have you broken the eighth Commandment, and ſtand guilty of eternal death. For God in this Commandment chargeth us to have as great a care

of

of our neighbours goods, as of our own; and not to injure him any manner of way, in thought, word or deed. Therefore all deceit, pilfering, oppreſſing, and all unjuſt dealing with our neighbours goods, is here condemned. Moreover, let me ask you, Whether you did never lye or diſſemble?

Aſun. *Yes, aſſuredly.*

Theol. Then have you broken the ninth Commandment: when God chargeth us, both in witneſs bearing, and all other matters, and all other matters, to ſpeak the plain truth from our heart: without lying or diſſembling.

Laſt of all, I demand, whether you did never in your heart deſire ſomething that was not your own: as your neighbours houſe, or ground, kind or ſheep, *&c.* therein bewrawing the diſcontentment of your heart.

Aſun. I *am as guilty in this, as in any thing. For, God forgive me,* I *have often deſired and luſted after this and that which was none of mine own, and ſo have bewrayed my diſcontentment.*

Theol. Then I perceive (by your own confeſſion) that your are guilty of the breach of all the Commandments,

Aſun. I *muſt needs confeſs it for* I *ſee now more into that matter than ever* I *did.* I *never heard ſo much before in my life, nor was ever asked any ſuch queſtions as you ask me.* I *had thought many of thoſe things which you asked me, had been no ſins at all.*

Theol. I could have convicted you in a thouſand other particulars, wherein you daily and hourly break the Law of God. But my purpoſe was onely to give you a taſte of ſome particular tranſgreſſions, and therewithal ſome little light by the way into the meaning of the Law: that thereby you might be brought to ſome better ſight of your ſelf, and might a little perceive in what caſe you ſtand before God; and by that little, conceive a great deal more.

Aſun. *Well; now* I *do plainly ſee, that* I *have been deceived, and am not in ſo good an eſtate before God: as* I *thought*

thought I had been. Moreover, I see that thousands are out of the way, which think they are in a good case before God: whereas indeed they are in blindness, and in their sins. But Lord have mercy upon us! I do now plainly see, that I am far from keeping the Commandments; and I think no man doth keep them.

Theol. You may swear it, I warrant you. For neither Saint *Paul*, *David*, or the Virgin *Mary* could ever keep any one of the Commandments. I am glad you begin to see into the Law of God, and to have some taste that way. For as a man's knowledge and in-sight is into the Law, so is his knowledge and in-sight into himself. He that hath a deep in-sight into the Law of God, hath also a deep insight into himself. He that hath no in-sight into the Law, can have no insight into himself. For the Law is that glass, wherein we do behold the face of our souls before God. The Apostle saith, *By the Law cometh the knowledge of sin.* Therefore those who are altogether ignorant of the Law, and never behold themselves in this glass, do commit an hundred sins a day, which they know not of; and therefore are not grieved for them. For how can a man be grieved for that which he knoweth not? But now farther, I pray you to give me leave to ask you some more questions of the principles of Religion; to the end, that you, knowing and feeling your ignorance, may be humbled therewith, bewail it in time, and seek after the true knowledge of God. But yet, by the way, I will ask *Antilegon* a question or two; because I desire to understand what knowledge he hath in the grounds of Religion. Tell me therefore, *Antilegon* what was the reason that Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost.

Anti. *I could answer you, but I will not. What authority have you to examine me? Shew your Commission. When I see your warrant, I will answer you: in the mean time, you have nothing to do to examine me. Meddle with that you have to do withal.*

Theol.

Theol. I perceive you are not only ignorant, but wilful and obſtinate, and refuſe all inſtructions. Therefore I will leave you to God, and to your galled conſcience. But I pray you, *Aſunetus*, anſwer this queſtion. What think you, what was the reaſon that Chriſt was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt?

Aſun. *Believe me, Sir, that is an hard queſtion; you may ask a wiſe man that queſtion: for I cannot anſwer it.*

Theol. What ſay you then to this, Who was Chriſt's mother?

Aſun. *Marry, Sir, that was our bleſſed* Lady.

Theol. VVhat was *Pontius Pilate?*

Aſun. *I am ſomewhat ignorant, I am not book-learned: but if you will have my ſimple opinion, I think it was the Devil. For none but the Devil would put our ſweet Saviour to death.*

Theol. What is the Holy Catholick Church which you do believe.

Aſun. *The communion of Saints, the forgiveneſs of ſins.*

Theol. VVhat do you pray for, when you ſay, *Thy Kingdom come.*

Aſun. *I do pray that God would ſend us all of his grace, that we may ſerve him, and do as we ought to do, and keep us in a good mind to God-ward, and to have him much in our mind. For ſome (God bleſs us) have nothing but the Devil in their mind; they do nothing a God's Name.*

Theol. VVhat is the Sacrament?

Aſun. *The Lord's Supper.*

Theol. How many Sacraments be there?

Aſun. *Two.*

Theol. VVhich be they?

Aſun. *Bread and Wine.*

Theol. VVhat is the principal end of your coming to receive the Sacrament.

Aſun. *To receive my Maker.*

Theol. VVhat is the principal uſe of a Sacrament.

Aſun.

Aſun. *The Body and Blood of Chriſt.*

Theol. VVhat profit and comfort have you by a Sacrament.

Aſun. *In token that Chriſt dyed for us.*

Theol. I can but pity you for your ignorance: for it is exceeding groſs and palpable. Your anſwers are to no purpoſe, and bewray a wonderful blindneſs and ſenſeleſneſs in matters of Religion. I am ſorry that now I have no time and leiſure to let you ſee your folly and extream ignorance; as alſo to lay open unto you the ſenſe and meaning of the Articles of the Faith, the Lords Prayer, and the Sacraments, and all other the grounds of Chriſtian Religion.

Aſun. *What courſe would you wiſh me to take, that I may come out of ignorance, and attain unto the true knowledge of God?*

Theol. Surely I would wiſh you to be diligent in hearing of Sermons, and reading the Scriptures, with Prayer and humility. Alſo that you would peruſe Catechiſms, and other good books, and eſpecially *Virels* grounds of Religion, and the works of the two worthy ſervants of God, Maſter *Giffard*, and Maſter *Perkins*, and other mens, that have done great ſervice to the Church, and for whom thouſands are bound to give God thanks. If you take this courſe, you ſhall by God's grace within a ſhort time grow to ſome good meaſure of knowledge in all the main grounds of Chriſtian Religion.

Phil. *I had not thought any man had been ſo ignorant, as now I perceive this man is.*

Theol. Yes verily, there be thouſands in his caſe. And I do know by experience, that many will uſe the very ſame anſwers, or at leaſt, very little differing.

Phil. *I warrant you, if you had queſtioned with him of kine or ſheep, purchaſing of Land, taking of Leaſes, or any other matters under the Sun, you ſhould have found him very ripe and ready in his anſwers.*

Theol. I am ſo perſwaded too. For let a man talk with worldly men of worldly matters, and their anſwer

ſwer is never to ſeek. They will talk very freſhly with you of ſuch matters, if it be all the day long. For they have a deep in-ſight into earthly things, and do wholly delight to talk of them, being never weary. For it is their joy, their meat and their drink. But come once to talk with them of God's matters, as of faith, repentance, regeneration, *&c.* You ſhall find them the verieſt dullards and dunces in the world. For when ſpeech is had of theſe things, they are ſo befogged, that they cannot tell where they are, nor what they ſay.

Phil. *In my judgment, ſuch mens caſe is very pitiful and dangerous: and ſo is this man's caſe alſo, if God do not very ſpeedily pull him out of it.*

Theol. Queſtionleſs: For God ſaith, (*Hoſ.* 4. 6.) *My people periſh for want of knowledge.* Our Lord Jeſus ſaith, that ignorance is the cauſe of all errours: (*Mat.* 22. 29.) *Ye err,* ſaith he, *not knowing the Scriptures.* The Apoſtle ſaith, that ignorance doth alienate us from the life of God: For ſaith he, (*Eph.* 4. 18.) *The Gentiles were darkned in their cogitation, being ſtrangers from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them.* So then it is clear that Ignorance is not the mother of Devotion, as the Papiſts do avouch, but it is the mother of error, death and deſtruction, as the Scripture affirmeth. Our Lord fore-ſeeing the great danger of ignorance, (how thereby thouſands are carryed head-long into Hell) doth admoniſh all men to ſearch the Scriptures, which do teſtifie of him, that ſo they might get out of the moſt dangerous gulf of ignorance, wherein multitudes are implunged: Commended therefore the Noble men of *Berea* are by the Holy Ghoſt, (*Act.* 17. 11.) becauſe they received the word with all readineſs, and ſearched the Scriptures dayly, whether thoſe things were ſo. Oh therefore that men would earneſtly ſeek after the knowledge of God in time; and (as the Prophet ſaith) *ſeek the Lord whilſt he may be found, call upon him whilſt he is near,* (*Eſay.* 55. 6.)

Phil. *I ſee that all ignorance in matters of faith, is dan-*

dangerous; but I think willful ignorance is of all other most dangerous.

Theol. Willfull ignorance (no doubt) is a plain prognostication and demonstrative argument of eternal death; for it is a most horrible and fearful thing for men to refuse instruction, despise counsel, harden their hearts, stop their ears, and close up their eyes against God. This is the very upshot of our decay.

Phil. I *pray you what call you hardness of heart?*

Theol. An hard heart is that which is neither moved with God's mercies, nor scared with his judgments; neither feareth the Law, nor regardeth the Gospel; neither is holpen by threatnings, nor softned by chastnings; which is unthankful for God's benefits, and disobedient to his counsels; made cruel by his rods, and dissolute by his favours; unshamefac'd to filthiness, and fearless to perils; uncourteous to men, and wretchless to God; forgetful of things past, negligent in things present, and improvident in things to come.

Phil. *Lay forth yet more plainly the state of ignorant and hard hearted men, and shew how lamentable it is.*

Theol. If a man be outwardly blind, we do pity him, and say, There goes a poor blind man, but if be both blind anddeaf, do we not more pity him, and say, Oh in how miserable a case is that man! but if he be both blind, deaf, and dumb, do we not most of all pity him, and say, Oh, that man is in a most woful taking, and in a most pitiful plight! How much more then are they to be pitied, which as concerning their souls, are both blind, deaf, and dumb, for the Diseases of the soul are far more dangerous, and more to be pityed than those of the body?

WVould it not pity a man's heart to see a poor sheep in a Lyons mouth, whilst he teareth him, rendeth him, and pulls out his guts? Even such is the case of ignorant men in the claws of the Devil. For the Devil hath them under him, rideth them at his pleasure, and teareth their souls in pieces.

Oh that we had eyes to see these things, hearts to feel them, and affections to be throughly moved with

with them, even unto mourning and tears!

Phil. *Few do think that ignorant men are in so woful a case as you speak of; for they think ignorance will excuse them. And some will say, they are glad they have so little knowledge. For if they should have much knowledge of their Masters will, and do it not, they should be beaten with many stripes; but now, being ignorant, they think all is safe.*

Theol. God willed his people to offer sacrifice for their sins of ignorance, therefore ignorance is a sin, and excuseth no man. And as for the state of their souls before God, it is most miserable, if we could see into their souls as we see their bodies. For assuredly there be multitudes which ruffle it out in Velvets and Silks, and most brave and glittering out-sides, but inwardly are full of filthiness and sin: they have fine delicate bodies, but most ugly, black and filthy Souls: if a man could see into their Souls, as he doth into their bodies, he would stop his nose at the stink of them. For they smell rank of sin in the Nostrils of God, his Angels, and all good men.

Phil. *Then I perceive by your speech, that the case of all ignorant and profane men, is fearfull in the sight of GOD, and that all good men are to pity them, and to pray for them.*

Theol. If two blind and deaf men should walk in a beaten path that leads to a great deep pond, wherein they are like to be drowned, if they go forwards, and two men far off should whoop unto them, and will them not to go forward lest they be drowned; yet they neither seeing any man, nor hearing any man, go forward, and are drowned: were not this a lamentable spectacle to behold? Even so is it with all the ignorant, blind and deaf souls of the world, for they see no perils, but walk on boldly to destruction. And though the Preachers of the Gospel whoop never so loud unto them, or give them never so many warnings and caveats to take heed, yet they being inwardly blind, see nothing; and spiritually deaf, hear nothing; and therefore go on forward in their sins and ignorance, till they suddenly fall into hell pit.

Put case also two great Armies should pitch a field, and

and fight a main battel upon a plain, and that ſome man ſhould ſtand upon the top of a Mountain hard by, and behold all, and ſhould ſee with his own eyes how thouſands, and ten thouſands went to wrack, and fell down on every ſide, as thick as hail, the whole plain ſwiming in blood: and ſhould alſo hear the groaning of Souldiers wounded, and the doleful ſighs and groanings of many Captains and Collonels giving up the ghoſt: were not this a moſt woful ſpectacle? Even ſo, when we do clearly ſee Satan wound and murder thouſand thouſand ſouls, is it not a far more tragical and lamentable ſight; and ought it not even to kill our hearts to behold it? but (alas) men have no eyes to ſee into theſe things. And yet certain it is, that Satan doth continually, and in moſt fearful manner; maſſacre innumerable ſouls. Thus have I ſhewed you the woful eſtate of profane and ignorant men.

Phil. *If it be ſo, you that be Miniſters and Preachers of the Goſpel, and have taken upon you the cure and charge of ſouls, have need to look about you, and do what in you lieth to ſave ſouls; and, as good ſhepheards, in great pity and compaſſion, to labour to pull them out of the paws of the roaring Lyon, which goes about continually, ſeeking whom he may devour.*

Theol. It ſtandeth us upon indeed very ſeriouſly and carefully to look to it, as we will anſwer it at the dreadfull day of judgment: For it is no ſmall matter that we have taken in hand, which is to take care for the flock which Chriſt hath bought with his blood. Would to God therefore that we would leave ſtriving about other matters, and ſtrive together all about this, who can pull moſt out of the kingdom of Satan, ſin and ignorance; who can win moſt ſouls, and who can perform beſt ſervice to the Church. This were a good life indeed: and would to God that we might at laſt with joyned forces go about it, and with one heart and hand joyn together to build up Gods houſe. If through our own follies the work hath been hindred, or any breach made, let us in wiſdom and love labour to make it up again; if there hath been any declining

and

and coldneſs, let us now at laſt revive, let us ſtir up our ſelves, that we may ſtir up others: let us be zealous and fervent in ſpirit, that we may through Gods grace put life into others: and rouze up this dead, declining and cold age wherein we live. So ſhall God be glorified, his church edified, his Saints comforted, his people ſaved, his throne erected, and the Kingdom of the Devil overthrown.

Phil. *what think you were the beſt courſe to effect this which you ſpeak of?*

Theol. This is a thing that muſt be exceedingly laboured in of us which are the Miniſters and Preachers of the Goſpel. And here is required diligence, and (as we ſay) double diligence, for the People are every where very ignorant. Some are ſtones altogether uncapable of inſtructions; others are froward and willful; ſome will receive the doctrine but not the practice; ſome again are altogether ſet upon peeviſhneſs and cavilling. So that a man had better take upon him the charge of keeping Wolves and Bears, than the charge of ſouls. For it the hardeſt thing in the world to reform mens diſorders and to bring them into order; to pull mens ſouls out of the Kingdom of Satan, and to bring them to God. It is as we ſay, an endleſs piece of work, and infinite toyl, a labour of all labours: I quake to think of it. For men are ſo obſtinate and irrefragable, that they will be brought into no order, they will come under no yoak, They will not be ruled by God, nor bridled by his Word: They will follow their own ſwinge. They will run after their own luſts and pleaſures. They will rage and ſtorm if you go about to curb them, and reſtrain them of their wills, likings and liberties. They will have their wills, likings and liberties. They will have their wills, and follow their old faſhions, ſay what you will, and do what you can.

Is it not, think you, a buſie piece of work to ſmooth and ſquare ſuch timber logs, ſo full of knoes and knobs? Is it not a tedious and irkſome thing to think upon? And would it not kill a mans heart to go about it?

it? For how hard a thing is it to bring ſuch into frame, as are ſo far out of frame?

Phil. *Well, Sir, you can but do your endeavour, and commit the ſucceſs to God. You can but plant and water: let God give increaſe. You are Miniſters of the Letter; but not of the Spirit. You baptize with water; but not with the holy Ghoſt. If you therefore preach diligently, exhort, admoniſh, and reprove publickly and privately, ſtudying all good example of life, and ſeeking with all good zeal, care and conſcience, to do the uttermoſt that in you lyeth, to reduce them from their evil wayes: I take it, you are diſcharged, though they remain ſtubborn and incorrigible. For you know what the Lord ſaith by his Prophet,* Ezek. 33. 9. *If you do admoniſh them, and give them warning, then you ſhall be diſcharged, and their blood ſhall be required at their own hands.*

Theol. You have ſpoken the truth, and therefore, ſith ſome muſt needs take upon them this ſo great a charge, it will be our beſt courſe, to labour much with them in Catechizing, and private Inſtructions, and that in moſt familiar and plain manner. For much good hath been done and is done this way. The ignorant ſort muſt be much laboured upon this way: and ſo no doubt, much good may be done. For in all labour there is profit. (*Pro.* 14. 23.) Herein we (that are the Miniſters of Chriſt) muſt be content to be abaſed, and to teach the poor ignorant people in moſt plain manner; asking them many eaſie queſtions, and often queſtioning with them in moſt plain and loving manner; till we have brought them to ſome taſte and ſmack of the principles of Chriſtian Religion. We muſt not be aſhamed to uſe repetitions and tautologies, and to tell them one thing twenty times over, and over again, here a line, and there a line, here a little, and there a little, precept upon precept, as the Prophet ſpeaks. (*Iſa.* 28. 10.) I know right well, nothing goes more againſt the ſtomack of a Scholar, and him that is learned indeed, than to do thus. It

is

is as irkſome and tedious as to teach A, B, C. Some can at no hand endure it. But truly, truly, I find now, after a long experience, that if we will do any good to theſe ſimple and ignorant ſouls, we muſt enter into this courſe; and we may not be aſhamed of it. For it will be our crown and our glory to win ſouls, howſoever we be abaſed. Let us therefore be well content to ſtoop down, that Chriſt may be exalted: let us be abaſed that God may be honoured; let us do all things in great love to Chriſt, who hath ſaid, (*Joh.*21.15.) *If thou loveſt me, feed, feed, feed my flock.* Let us therefore teſtifie our love to him, by feeding his flock. Let us do all things in great love and deep compaſſion towards the poor ſouls that go aſtray; as it is ſaid, that our Lord Jeſus was moved to pity, and his bowels did yern to ſee the people as ſheep without a ſhepherd: let it likewiſe move us throughly, and make our hearts to bleed, to ſee ſo many poor ſheep of Chriſt, wandring and ſtraying in the Mountains and wilderneſſe of this world, caught in every bramble, and hanged in every buſh, ready to be devoured of the Wolf.

Thus I have ſhewed you, what courſe (in my judgement) is beſt to be taken for the delivering of poor ignorant ſouls out of the captivity of Satan and ſin.

Phil. *Now as you have declared what courſe is beſt to be followed on your part which are Miniſters and Preachers of the Goſpel; ſo, I pray you, ſhew what is beſt to be done of us which are the people of God.*

Theol. The beſt counſel that I can give you, if it were for my life is to be much exerciſed in the word of God, both in hearing, reading, and meditation thereof, and alſo to purchaſe unto your ſelf, the ſincere Miniſtry of the Goſpel, and to make conſcience to live under it; eſteeming your ſelf happy if you have it, though you want other things; and unhappy if you have it not, though you have all other things. For it is a pearleſs pearl an incomparable jewel, (*Mat.*13.44.) For the purchaſing whereof, we are adviſed by our Lord Jeſus

Jeſus to ſell all that we have, rather than to go without it, again our Saviour Chriſt gives the ſame counſel to the Church of *Laodicea*, in theſe words: *I counſel thee to buy of me gold tryed by the fire, that thou mayeſt be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayeſt be cloathed, and that thy filthy nakedneſs do not appear; and anoint thy eyes with eye-ſalve, that thou mayeſt ſee*, *Apoc.* 3. 18. Where you ſee the Word of God is compared to moſt precious gold, whereby we are made ſpiritually rich; and to glittering attire, wherewith our naked ſouls are cloathed; and to an eye-ſalve, wherewith our ſpiritual blindneſs is cured, we are advertiſed alſo by Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe counſel is ever the beſt, to buy theſe things whatſoever they coſt us. The ſame counſel alſo giveeth wiſe *Solomon*, ſaying, *Buy the truth, but ſell it not*, *Prov.* 23. 23. So then you ſee the counſel which herein I give you, is not of mine own but the counſel of Jeſus himſelf, and *Solomon* the wiſe; and who can, or who dare except againſt their counſel?

Aſun. *Is your meaning that men muſt of neceſſity frequent preaching of the Word? will not bare reading ſerve the turn?*

Theol. I told you before, that reading is good, profitable and neceſſary, but yet it is not ſufficient. We muſt not content our ſelves with that onely, but we muſt go further, and get unto our ſelves the ſound preaching of the Goſpel, as the chiefeſt and moſt principle means which God hath ordained and ſanctified for the ſaving of men. As Saint *Paul* ſaith, *when as the world (by wiſdom) knew not God, in the wiſdom of God it pleaſed God, by the fooliſhneſs of preaching, to ſave them that believe*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. The meaning of it is, that when as men, neither by natural wiſdom, nor the contemplation of the creatures, could ſufficiently attain to the true knowledge of God; the Lord according to his heavenly and infinite wiſdom, thought of another courſe, which is to ſave men by preaching, which the world counteth fooliſhneſs. And by the way, note that the preaching of the Word is not a thing of humane invention, but it is Gods own de-

vice, and came firſt from him, and is the next and neareſt way to ſave mens ſouls.

Wiſe *Solomon* alſo in the Book of the Proverbs telleth us, that the preaching of Gods Word (which he calleth Viſion, uſing the word of the Prophets, which called their Sermons Viſions) is not a thing that may be ſpared, or that we may be at our choice, whether we have it or no: but he maketh it to be of abſolute neceſſity unto eternal life. For he ſaith, *Where Viſion faileth, the people are left naked, Prov.*29. 18. So indeed it is in the Original: but the old Tranſlation giveth us the ſenſe thus: *Where the Word of God is not preached, there the people periſh.* Thus you ſee that *Solomon* ſtrikes it dead, telling us that all they which are without preaching of the Word, are in exceeding great danger of loſing their ſouls. O that men could be perſwaded of this! St. *Paul* alſo ſaith, That *faith cometh by hearing the Word preached,* (*Rom.* 10 14.) for he ſaith, *How can they hear without a Preacher?* If faith cometh by hearing the Word preached, then I reaſon thus: No preaching, no faith: no faith, no Chriſt, no Chriſt, no eternal life; for eternal life is onely in him. Let us then put them together thus: Take away the Word, take away faith, take away faith, take away Chriſt; take away Chriſt, and take away eternal life. So then it follows, Take away the Word and take away eternal life. Or we may read them backward, thus; if we will have Heaven, we muſt have Chriſt, if we will have Chriſt, we muſt have faith, if we will have faith, we muſt have the Word preached. Then it followeth thus: If we will have Heaven, we muſt have the Word preached. Then I conclude, that preaching generally, and for the moſt part, is of abſolute neceſſity unto eternal life, as meat is of abſolute neceſſity for the preſervation of our bodies, as graſs and fodder are of abſolute neceſſity for the upholding of the life of beaſts, and water of abſolute neceſſity for the life of fiſhes. Then this being ſo, men are with great care and conſcience to hear the Goſpel preached, to frequent Sermons, to reſort much to *God's* houſe and habitation, where

where his honour dwelleth; with *David* to ſay, (*Pſal.* 27. 4.) *One thing have I deſired of the Lord, that will I require, even that I may dwell in the houſe of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to viſit his holy Temple.* With godly *Mary* to ſay, (*Luk.* 10. 42.) *One thing is neceſſary,* and to chuſe the better part. With the poor Cripple at *Bethesda,* (*John* 5. 7.) to wait for the moving of the waters by the Angel, that his impotency may be cured: I mean, that we ſhould tye our ſelves to the firſt moving of the ſpiritual waters of life, by the Preachers of the Goſpel, that our ſpiritual impotency may be holpen and relieved. For the Miniſtry of the Goſpel is that golden Pipe whereby, and where-through all the goodneſs of God, all the ſweetneſs of Chriſt, and all Heavenly graces whatſoever, are derived unto us. Which thing was ſhadowed in the Law, by the pomegranates in the skirts of *Aaron*'s garments, (*Exo.* 28. 33.) and the golden Bells between them round about; that is, a golden Bell and a Pomegranate, a golden Bell and a Pomegranate. The golden Bells did ſignifie the preaching of the Goſpel, and the Pomegranates the ſweet ſavour of Chriſt's death. Noting thereby, that the ſweet ſavour of Chriſt's death, and all the benefits of his paſſion, ſhould be ſpread abroad by the preaching of the Goſpel. Thus you ſee, that if men ever purpoſe to be ſaved, they muſt make more account of the Preaching of the Goſpel than they have done, and not think (as moſt men do) that they may be without it, and yet do well enough: and ſome had as leeve be without it, as have it; for it doth but diſquiet them, and trouble their conſciences: but wo unto ſuch.

Phil *Yet we ſee where the Word is ſoundly preached, there be many bad people; and the reaſons thereof, in mine opinion, are two: The one, that God taketh his Holy Spirit from many in hearing the Word, ſo that their hearing is made unfruitful: The other, that the Devil hath an hundred devices to hinder the effectual working of the Word, ſo as it ſhall do no good at all, nor take any ef-*

ſects in multitudes of men. But you, Maſter Theologus, *can better lay open this matter than* I, *I pray you therefore ſpeak ſomething of it.*

Theol. The ſleights of Satan in this behalf, are more, and more ſlie, than I or any man elſe can poſſibly diſcover. For who is able to deſcry, or in ſufficient manner to lay open the deep ſubtelties and moſt ſecret and ſinful ſuggeſtions of the Devil in the hearts of men? He is ſo cunning a crafts-maſter this way, that none can perfectly trace him. His workings in the hearts of men are with ſuch cloſe and hideous deceits, and moſt methodical and crafty conveyances, that none can ſufficiently find them out. But yet notwithſtanding, I will bewray unto you ſo much as I know, or can conceive of his dealings with them that hear the word, that he may ſteal it out of their hearts, and make it fruitleſs and unprofitable. Firſt of all he beſtirreth him, and labours hard to keep all men faſt aſleep in their ſins, that they may have no care at all of their own ſalvation, and therefore diſſwadeth them from hearing or reading the word at all, leſt they ſhould be awaked. If this will not prevail, but that they muſt needs hear, then his craft is to make their hearing unprofitable, by ſleepineſs, dulneſs, by-thoughts, conceitedneſs, and a thouſand ſuch like. If this will not ſerve the turn, but that the word doth get within them, and work upon them, (ſo as thereby they grow to ſome knowledge and underſtanding of the truth) then he practiſeth another way, which is to make them reſt themſelves upon their bare knowledge, and ſo become altogether conſcienceleſs. If this will not ſuffice, but that men fall to doing, and leave ſome ſins, eſpecially the groſs ſins of the world, and do ſome good, then he perſwadeth them to truſt to thoſe doings without Chriſt, and to think themſelves well enough, becauſe they do ſome good, and leave ſome evil. If this be not enough, but that men attain unto the true juſtifying faith, which apprehendeth Chriſt, and reſteth upon his merits, then he deviſeth how to blemiſh the beau-

ty

ty of their faith, and weaken their comfort through many frailties and wants; yea, groſs down-falls and rank evils; ſo as they ſhall be but ſpotted and leprous Chriſtians. If this weapon will not work, but that Chriſtians do joyn all good vertues with their faith, and abundantly ſhine forth in all the fruits of righteouſneſs, then he caſteth about another way, which is, to daunt and damp them with diſcouragements; as poverty, neceſſity, ſickneſs, reproaches, contempt, perſecutions, *&c.* If none of all theſe will do the deed, but that men conſtantly believe in Chriſt, and patiently and joyfully endure all afflictions, then his laſt refuge is to blow them up with gun-powder: that is to puff them up with a pride of their gifts, graces, and ſtrength, and ſo to give them an utter overthrow whilſt they do not walk humbly, and give God the praiſe of his gifts.

Thus have you a little taſte of Satans cunning, in making the Word unfruitful amongſt us.

Aſun. *I pray you, good Sir, (ſeeing I am ignorant and unlearned) give me ſome particular directions out of the word of God, for the good guiding and ordering of my particular actions, in ſuch ſort as that I may glorifie God in the earth, and after this life be glorified of him for ever.*

Theol. It were an infinite thing to enter into all particulars; but briefly do this: Firſt, ſeek God earneſtly in his word, pray much, in all things give thanks, eſchew evil, and do good; fear God, and keep his Commandments; reform your ſelf and your houſhold; love vertue, and vertuous men; keep company with the godly, and avoid the ſociety of the wicked. Live ſoberly, juſtly, and holily in this preſent evil world. Speak always graciouſly, and beware of filthy communication. Recompence no man evil for evil, but recompence evil with good. Be courteous and pitiful towards all men. Take heed of ſwearing, curſing and banning. Beware of anger, wrath and bitterneſs. Praiſe your friend openly, reprove him ſecretly. Speak no evil of them that are abſent, nor of the dead.

Speak evil of no man, ſpeak alwaies the beſt, or at leaſt not the worſt. Reverence God's Name, and keep his Sabbaths. Avoid all the ſigns of condemnation, and labour after all the ſigns of ſalvation. Above all things take heed of ſin, for that is the very cut-throat of the Soul, and of all goodneſs. Tremble therefore and ſin not; for if you ſin, mark what followeth:

Six great dangers in Sin.

God ſeeth: His Angels bear witneſs: The Conſcience pricketh: Death threatneth: The Devil accuſeth, Hell devoureth.

You ſee then that ſin is no ſcare-crow or jeſting matter. Every ſin that a man committeth, is as a thorn thruſt deep into the ſoul, which will not be got out again, but with many a ſigh, and with many a ſorrowful Oh, oh, every ſin is written with a pen of Iron, (*Jer.* 17. 1.) and the point of a Diamond upon the conſcience, and ſhall in the laſt day (when the Book ſhall be opened) accuſe us and give in evidence againſt us. If a man commit ſin with pleaſure, the pleaſure paſſeth away, but the conſcience and ſting of the ſin abideth and tormenteth deadly; but if a man do well, though with labour and painfulneſs, the pain paſſeth away, yet the Conſcience of well doing remaineth with much comfort. But the beſt end of ſin is always repentance; if not in this life, then with wo and alas when it is too late. Therefore take heed in time; take heed, I ſay, of ſin: for

Note this.

Six moſt hurtful effects of ſin.

Sin hardens the heart, *Heb.* 3. 13.
Sin gnaws the conſcience, 1 *Sam.* 25.
Sin fights againſt the ſoul, 1 *Pet.* 1. 11.
Sin brings forth death, *Jam.* 1. 15.
Sin makes aſhamed, *Rom.* 6. 21.
Sin procures plagues of body or ſoul. *Deut.* 28.

Behold therefore the evil effects of ſin. For this cauſe *Zophar the Naamathite* ſpeaks very wiſely to *Job*, ſaying, (*Job.* 11. 15, 16.) *When thou ſhalt lift thy face out of thy ſin, thou ſhalt be ſtrong, and ſhalt not fear: thou ſhalt forget all ſorrow, thou ſhalt remember it as the waters that are paſt.* VVhere *Zophar* plainly ſheweth, that the avoiding of ſin is our ſtrength, and the committing of it our weakning: according to that of *Solomon*, (*Pro.* 10. 29.) *The way of the Lord is the ſtrength of the upright man.* Therefore walk in the way of GOD, and take heed of the ways of ſin; for GOD puniſheth every ſin his way, ſome one way, and ſome another; and no ſin can eſcape unpuniſhed. For becauſe God is juſt, therefore he muſt needs puniſh ſin in all men, though in divers manners, as the wicked in their own perſons, the godly in Chriſt. Beware of it therefore, and flatter not your ſelf in your ſins. Remember how every diſobedience, and every tranſgreſſion hath had a juſt recompence of reward. God hath in all ages matched the cauſe with the effect; that is, ſin with the puniſhment of ſin. The *Iſraelites* for breaking the firſt Commandment, in making other Gods, were often ſmitten by the hand of God. *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the ſons of *Haron*, for the breach of the ſecond Commandment, in offering ſtrange fire upon God's Altar, were conſumed with fire. (*Lev.* 10. 2.) He that blaſpheemed and tranſgreſſed the Third Commandment, was ſtoned to Death. (*Levit.* 24. 14.) He that brake the fourth Commandment, in gathering ſticks on the Sabbath day, was likewiſe ſtoned. (*Numb.* 15. 32.) *Abſolom* tranſgreſſing the fifth, was hanged in his own hair. (*2 Sam.* 18. 9.) *Cain* tranſgreſſing the ſixth, in ſlaying his brother *Abel*, was branded with the mark of God's wrath. (*Gen.* 4. 15.) *Sichem* the Son of *Hamor*, tranſgreſſing the ſeventh, in defiling *Dinah* the Daughter of *Jacob*, was ſlain by *Simeon* and *Levi* the Sons of *Jacob*. (*Gen.* 34. 26.) *Achan* ſinning againſt the

Note how God in all ages hath puniſhed the breakers of his law. Exod. 32. 30.

the eighth Commandment in ſtealing the wedge of gold, and the Babyloniſh Garment, was ſtoned to death. (*Joſ.* 7. 25.) *Ananias* and *Saphira* ſinning againſt the ninth, in lying and diſſembling, were ſuddenly ſmitten with death. (*Acts* 5. 10.) *Ahab* tranſgreſſing the tenth Commandment, in coveting and diſcontentment; was devoured of Dogs, 1 *Kings* 21. 24.) Or if you will have original ſin therein only forbidden, then Infants are therefore puniſhed with death, (*Rom.* 5. 14.)

Thus we ſee there is no dallying with GOD; but if we ſin, we are are as ſure to be jerkt for it, as the coat is on our back. Therefore let us not deceive our ſelves, nor make light of ſin, for ſin is no ſcarbug, and we ſhall one day find it ſo. And howſoever we make light of ſome ſins, yet in very deed all ſin is odious in the ſight of GOD; yea, all ſin is hainous and capital in this reſpect, that it is againſt a perſon of infinite being, it is againſt GOD himſelf, it is againſt the higheſt Majeſty. For the greatneſs of the perſon offended, doth inhaunce and increaſe the greatneſs of ſin.

As for example: If a man rail at a Juſtice of peace, he ſhall be ſtocked: if he rail at one of His Majeſties privy Council, he ſhall be impriſoned: but if he rail at his own Majeſty, he ſhall be hanged. So then you ſee how a ſin is increaſed by the dignity of the perſon offended. Now then, ſith all mortal Princes are but duſt in the ſight of God, (and he is a perſon of infinite and incomparable Majeſty) how hainous and how flagitious a thing is it, in any wiſe, or after any ſort to ſin againſt His Moſt Royal and Sacred Perſon? Well then, to grow to ſome concluſion, this I do adviſe you; as to ſhun all vice, ſo to embrace all vertue; as to put off the old man, ſo to put on the new man. Remember often and alwaies, what ſhall become of you after this life, whether you ſhall be forty years hence in Hell or Heaven. Look well to that in time; and therefore ſo live, that you may live alwaies. Conſider often in your ſerious cogitation.

Nine

Nine profitable Conſiderations.

What you have been: what you are: what you ſhall be: what God hath done for you: what he doth: what he will do: Gods judgments paſt: Gods judgements preſent: Gods judgements to come.

Awake at laſt, and take care for your ſalvation, Sleep no longer in ſin, leſt ye periſh eternally. *For verily there is a reward for the righteous: doubtleſs there is a God that judges the earth,* (*Pſal.*58.11.) And this is the beſt counſel I can give you.

Aſun. *Your counſel is very good. I pray God give me grace to follow it, and ſo to live, that I may pleaſe God, and go to heaven in the end.*

Theol. You muſt take heed you ſpeak not theſe words of courſe, and for faſhion ſake, having no ſettled purpoſe in your heart to follow theſe directions: For there be numbers that can skill to give good words, but they will do nothing. They think they highly pleaſe God with their good words, and that God will take them for payment, as though God regarded words. They would fain go to Heaven, but they will take no pains, they will leave no ſins, they will not forgo their luſts and pleaſures. They would have the reward of Gods Children, but they will not do the works of Gods Children. They would have the ſweet, but they will none of the ſowr. They would have the crown, but they will fight never a ſtroke. They would fain come to *Canaan* but they are loath to travel that long and dangerous way which leadeth unto it. Therefore thoſe men being the Sons of idleneſs, will ſtep ſhort (in the end) of that they look for. For the Spirit ſaith, *The ſluggard luſts, but his ſoul hath nought,* (*Prov.* 13.4.) We muſt therefore leave bare words, and come to deeds. For our Lord Jeſus ſaith, (*Mat.*7.21.) *Not every one that ſaith Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven:* Where we ſee Chriſt (in plain terms) excludes out of his kingdom all thoſe whoſe Religion conſiſteth only in

good words, and ſmooth ſpeeches; but make no conſcience to practiſe the Commandments of God.

David, having made ſome good preparation for the building of the Temple, and perceiving his ſon *Solomon* to have ſtuff and proviſion enough to perfect and finiſh it, doth moſt wiſely encourage him to the work in theſe words: *up and be doing, and the* Lord *ſhall be with thee*, (1 *Chron.* 29. 20.) Oh that men would follow this counſel of *David*, that they would up and be doing, and not ſit ſtill and do nothing; that they would leave words and countenances, and ſet upon the practiſe of Gods Law, and ſtudy with all care and conſcience to be obedient to his will. Then aſſuredly God would be with them, and bleſs them, and much good would come of it. For the Scripture ſaith, (*Prov.* 14. 23.) *In all labour there is profit or increaſe: but the talk of the lips onely bringeth want.*

Phil. *Moſt mens minds are ſo wholly drowned in the love of this world, that they have no heart to obey God, nor any delight in his Commandments.*

Theol. The greateſt part of men are like the *Gadarens*, which eſteemed their ſwine more than Chriſt. As we ſee in theſe our dayes, how many make more account of their kine and ſheep, than of the moſt glorious Goſpel of Chriſt. They highly eſteem dung, and contemn pearl. They are careful for trifles, and regard not the things of greateſt moment; and therefore may fitly be compared to a man, who having his wife and children very ſick, doth utterly neglect them, and is altogether careful for the curing of his hogs ears.

Phil. *We are ſomewhat digreſſed from the matter we had in hand: I pray you therefore, if you have any more matter of good counſel to give to* Aſunetus, *that you would preſently deliver it.*

Theol. I have little more to ſay, ſave onely I would adviſe him often to remember, and to muſe on theſe things.

Nine things much to be thought on.

The evil he hath committed.
The good he hath omitted.
The time that he hath miſ-ſpent.
The ſhortneſs of this life.
The vanity of this world.
The excellency of the world to come.
Death, than the which nothing is more terrible.
The day of Judgement, than the which nothing is more fearful.
Hell-fire, than the which nothing is more intolerable.

Phil. *This is ſhort and ſweet indeed. You have touched ſome of theſe points before, in this our conference. But I am very deſirous to hear ſomewhat more of the two laſt, which yet have not been ſpoken of.*

Theol. Sith you are deſirous, I will briefly deliver unto you that which I have have received from the Lord. Firſt concerning the day of judgment. I find in the volume of Gods Book, that it ſhall be very terrible and dreadful. For, *The Son of man ſhall come in the clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory*, Mat. 24.30. St. *Peter* ſaith, (2 *Pet.*3.10.) *The day of the Lord ſhall come as a thief in the night, in the which the Heavens ſhall paſs away with a noiſe, the elements ſhall melt with heat, and the earth, with the works that are therein, ſhall be burnt up.* The Apoſtle telleth us, that at Chriſts coming the whole world ſhall be of a light fire; and that all Caſtles, Towers, goodly Buildings, Gold, Silver, Velver, Silks, and all the glittering hue, glory and beauty of this world, ſhall be conſumed to powder and aſhes. For he ſaith plainly, *The heavens and the earth which are now, are reſerved to fire againſt the day of judgment, and of the deſtruction of ungodly men*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 7. Moreover, he ſtrongly proves, that as the world was once deſtroyed by water, ſo the ſecond time, in the end thereof, it ſhall be deſtroyed with fire. The Apoſtle Saint *Paul* witneſſeth the ſame

thirgs;

things; for he ſaith, *Chriſt ſhall come from heaven, with all his mighty Angels in flaming fire*, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 7. And in another place he notes the terrour of his coming to judgment, ſaying, *He ſhall come with a ſhout, with the voice of the Arch-Angel, and the Trump of God*, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 16. We ſee by experience, that the coming of mortal Princes to any place, is with great pomp and glory. They have great trains and troops behind them and before them. They are accompanyed with many Nobles: goodly Lords, and gallant Ladies do attend upon them. The Sword-bearers, Trumpeters, and Harbingers, go before: many flaunting and ſtately Perſonages follow after. Now then, if the coming of mortal Princes be ſo pompous and glorious; how much more glorious ſhall the coming of the Son of man be; in whoſe ſight all mortal Princes are but duſt? The Scriptures do affirm, that his ſecond coming unto judgment ſhall be with ſuch reſplendent and unſpeakable glory, that even the moſt excellent creatures ſhall bluſh at it. For *the Sun ſhall be darkened*; *and the Moon ſhall not give her light*; *and the Stars ſhall fall from Heaven*, *Mat.* 24. 29. Meaning thereby, that the moſt glorious and bright-ſhining Creatures ſhall be clouded and obſcured by the unconceiveable brightneſs of Chriſt's coming.

Moreover, the terrour of Chriſt's coming is noted unto us in this, that immediately before it, the very Sea ſhall quake and tremble, and in his kind cry out. For it is ſaid, that *The Sea ſhall roar*, (and make a noyſe in moſt doleful and lugubrious manner) *and mens hearts ſhall fail them for fear, and for looking after thoſe things which ſhall come on the world; for the powers of heaven ſhall be ſhaken*, *Luk.* 21. 25. O what ſhall become of Swearers, Drunkards, Whoremongers and ſuch like, in that day! They ſhall ſeek to creep into an auger-hole to hide their heads. They ſhall then cry, Wo and alas that ever they were born. They ſhall wiſh that they had never been born, or that their mothers had born them toads. And as it is in the Apocalypſe,

calypſe, *They ſhall ſay to the Mountains and Rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the preſence of him that ſitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of his wrath is come, and who can ſtand?*

We ſee therefore, that the coming of Chriſt ſhall not be baſe and contemptible, as in his firſt viſitation: but it ſhall be moſt terrible, princely, and glorious. And as the Scriptures do affirm, that his coming ſhall be with great terrour and dread; ſo alſo they do ſhew, that it ſhall be very ſudden and unlooked for. For the *day of the Lord ſhall come as a thief in the night*; 2 *Pet.* 3.10. *as the travel that cometh upon a woman*, 1 *Theſ.*5. 2. *As a ſnare it ſhall come on all them that dwell on the face of the earth*, *Luk.*21.35. That is, it ſhall ſuddenly catch and entangle all men, whatſoever they be in the world. As the earth-quake which was near ninety years agone, did ſuddenly take the world tardy, they not thinking of any ſuch matter: So ſhall the coming of the Son of man to judgement take the world tardy and unprepared; for few there be that think of any ſuch matter. Sith therefore the ſecond appearing of Chriſt ſhall be with ſuch ſuddeneſs, let us fear and tremble; for all ſudden things are to be feared.

Phil. *Well, Sir, as you have ſhewed the terrour and ſuddenneſs of Chriſts coming, ſo ſhew us the purpoſe and end of his coming.*

Theol. The principle end of his coming, ſhall be to keep a general audit, to call all men to an account, to have a reckoning of every mans particular actions, and to reward them according to their deeds: as it is written, (*Mat.* 16.27.) *The Son of man ſhall come in the glory of his Father, with his Angels, and then he ſhall give to every man according to his deeds.* Again, the Apoſtle ſaith to the *Corinthians*, *We muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, that every man may receive the things which are done in his body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be be good or evil*, 2 Cor. 5. 10.

Here

Here we do plainly ſee, that the end of Chriſt's coming ſhall be able to judge every man according to his works; that is, as his works ſhall declare him, and teſtifie of him, and of his faith. In another place the Apoſtle ſaith, that the end of his coming ſhall be *to render vengeance unto them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting perdition from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* (*2 Theſ.* 1. 8, 9.) Wo then unto two ſorts of men, the ignorant and the diſobedient. For the Apoſtle ſaith flatly, they both ſhall be damned. Methinks both the ignorant and diſobedient, and all other prophane men, ſhould tremble to think of this, that Chriſt ſhall come to render vengeance unto them. If we did certainly know that a foreign enemy ſhould invade our Nation, over-run it, and make a conqueſt of it, that he ſhould ſhed our blood, deſtroy us, and make a maſſacre amongſt us; yea, that we ſhould ſee our wives, our children, our kindred, and dear friends ſlain before our faces, ſo as their blood ſhould ſtream in the ſtreets, what a wonderful fear and terrour would it ſtrike into us? we would quake to think of it. Shall we not then be much more afraid of the damnation of our Souls? Shall we not quake to think that Chriſt ſhall come to take vengeance? If the Lyon roar, all the beaſts of the field tremble: and ſhall not we be afraid of the roaring of the Lyon of the Tribe of *Judah*? But alas, we are ſo hard-hearted, and ſo rockt aſleep in the cradle of ſecurity, that nothing can move us, nothing can awake us.

Phil. *Now as you have ſhewed us the terrour and end of Chriſt's coming, ſo alſo declare the manner.*

Theol. The manner of it is this, that the whole world ſhall be cited to appear perſonally, at the general Aſſizes, before the great judge. No man ſhall be admitted to appear by his Atturney, but all muſt appear perſonally. None ſhall be ſuffered to put in ſureties: but all muſt come in their own perſons, without bayl, or main-priſe; as it is written, *We muſt*

muſt all appear, high and low, rich and poor, King and Beggar, one and another; as it is plainly ſet down in the twentieth chapter of the *Revelations*, where the Spirit ſaith, *I ſaw the dead both great and ſmall ſtand before God; and the Sea gave up the dead which were in her, and death and Hell delivered up the dead which were in them.* So then it is clear, that all, without exception, ſhall make their appearance at the great and dreadful Aſſizes. O what a great day will that be, when as the whole world ſhall appear together at once! If a King marry his Son, and bid other Kings, Emperours, Dukes and Nobles to the marriage, with all their pomp and train, we uſe to ſay, O what a Marriage, what a meeting, what ado, what a great day will there be? But when the univerſal world ſhall be aſſembled together, not only all Monarches, Kings and Princes, but all other, that ever have been from the beginning of the world, all that are, and ſhall be, what a day will that be? No marvel therefore, though the Scriptures call it the day of God, and the great day of the Lord. Now then, when all fleſh is come together, to make their perſonal appearance, then ſhall the Son of God aſcend unto his Tribunal Seat, with great Majeſty and Glory. For *A fiery ſtream ſhall iſſue and come forth before him: a thouſand thouſand Angels ſhall accompany him, and miniſter unto him; and ten thouſand thouſand ſhall ſtand before him; the judgment ſhall be ſit, and the books opened.* All the Saints alſo, and true Worſhippers of God ſhall attend him, and accompany him unto his judgement ſeat. And not only ſo, but they ſhall ſit upon the Bench and Throne with him: as it is written, 1 *Cor.* 6. 2. *The Saints ſhall judge the world: they ſhall judge the Angels*: That is, the Devil, the Angels of darkneſs. Our Lord Jeſus himſelf did avouch the ſame thing, when he ſaid to his Diſciples, and in them to all true Chriſtians, *Verily I ſay unto you, that when the Son of Man ſhall ſit in the Throne of his Majeſty, ye which followed me in the regeneration, ſhall ſit upon twelve Thrones, and judge the twelve Tribes of Iſrael*:

(*Mat.*

(Mat. 19. 28.) That is, the Saints of God ſhall bear witneſs that the judgment of Chriſt, and ſentence of condemnation which he paſſeth againſt all unbelievers, is according to juſtice and equity. Thus then we ſee how Chriſt ſhall be accompanied to his Throne, and with what glory and Majeſty he ſhall aſcend unto it: Experience teacheth, that when mortal Judges hold their Seſſions and general Aſſizes, they are brought unto the Bench and Judgment ſeat with pomp and terrour. For the Sheriff of the Shire, and Halberdmen, with many Juſtices of Peace, and trains of others, do accompany them unto the Bench. Then with how much more Glory and Majeſty ſhall the Son of God be brought unto his Royal Throne? Thus then, Chriſt being ſet upon his Judgement-ſeat, all the ungodly ſhall be convented before him, and he ſhall ſtand over them with a naked ſword in his hand; the Devil ſhall ſtand by them on the one ſide to accuſe them, and their own Conſciences on the other ſide, and the gaping gulf of Hell underneath them, ready to devour them. Then ſhall the books be opened; not any books of paper and parchment, but the books of mens conſciences: for every man's ſins are written and recorded in his conſcience, as it were in a Regiſter book: Then will God bring every work to judgment, with every ſecret thought, and ſet them in order before all the Reprobates. Then *will God lighten the things that are hid in darkneſs, and make the counſels of the heart manifeſt.* *(1 Cor.* 4. 5.) Then ſhall all the ungodly be arraigned, convicted and hold up their hands at the Bar of Chriſt's Tribunal Seat, and ſhall cry, guilty. Then ſhall that moſt dreadful ſentence of death and condemnation be pronounced againſt them by the moſt righteous Judge, *Go ye curſed into everlaſting fire, which is prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* *(Mat.* 25. 41.) O doleful ſentence! O heavy hearing! Whoſe heart doth not tremble at theſe things? Whoſe hair doth not ſtand up on their heads? For then ſhall thouſands, which in this world have flouriſhed as the Cedars of *Libanus*, be caſt down for ever-

evermore, and ſhall drink (as a juſt recompence for their iniquity) of the bitter cup of God's eternal wrath and indignation, in the Kingdom of darkneſs, and in the fearful preſence of Satan, and all the curſed enemies of God's grace.

Phil. *Well, now as you have declared unto us the terror, the ſuddenneſs, the end, and the manner of Chriſt's coming to judgment; ſo laſtly, ſhew us the right uſe of all theſe things.*

Theol. Saint *Peter* telleth and teacheth us the right uſe of all: for, ſaith he, *Seeing all theſe things muſt be diſſolved, what maunner of perſons ought we to be in Holy converſation and godlineſs?* (2 *Pet.* 3. 11.) As if he ſhould ſay. Sith the Heavens ſhall paſs away with a a noiſe, the elements ſhall melt with heat, and the earth with the works that are therein, ſhall be burnt up: ſith alſo the coming of Chriſt ſhall be with great terrour, to a fearful end, and in a fearful maoner. O how ought we to excel in goodneſs? So then, Saint *Peter* telleth us, that the true uſe of all is this; that hereby we be brought nearer unto God, even to be more obedient to his will, and to walk in all his commandments, making conſcience of all our ways, and ſtudying to pleaſe God in all things, and to be fruitful in all good works, living ſoberly, juſtly, and holily in this preſent evil world, and ſhewing forth the vertues of him which hath called us out of darkneſs to this marvellous light: that ſo we may be prepared againſt the day of his appearing, that it may not take us tardy. For our life ought to be a continual meditation of death: we ſhould alwaies live as if we ſhould die, or that our bed ſhould be our grave: we muſt live continually, as if Chriſt ſhould come to judgment preſently, as it is reported of a godly man in the Primitive Church, that whether he ate or drank, or whatſoever he did, he thought alwaies he heard the trumpet of the Lord, with theſe words, *Ariſe ye dead, and come to judgment.* Put caſe it were certainly known, that Chriſt would come to judgement, the next Midſummer day; O what an alteration would it make

make in the world! how would men change their minds and affections? Who would care for this world? Who would ſet his heart upon riches? Who would regard brave apparel, who durſt deceive or oppreſs? who durſt be drunk, who durſt ſwear, lye, and commit adultery? Nay, would not all men give up themſelves to the obedience of God? would not all ſerve him diligently? would not all men and women flock to Sermons? would they not give up themſelves to prayer and reading? Would they not repent them of their ſins? would they not cry for mercy and forgiveneſs? See then what the knowledge of a certain day approaching would effect. And ought we not to do all theſe things with as great care and zeal ſeeing the day is uncertain? For who knoweth whether Chriſt will come this moneth or the next, this year or the next? He himſelf ſaith, *Be ye ready, watch, for in the hour that you think not of, will the Son of man come. (Mat. 24. 44.)* We think he will not come this year, nor next year, nor this hundred years. It may be therefore that he will come ſuddenly upon us, we know not how ſoon: For in an hour that we little think of, will he come. Therefore our Saviour ſaith in the thirteenth Chapter of *Mark*, verſe 33. *Take heed, watch, and pray; for you know not when the time is.* And in the Goſpel of St. *Luke*, he ſaith, *Take heed that your hearts be not overcome with ſurfeiting, and drunkenneſs, and the cares of this life; and ſo that day come upon you unawares. For as a ſnare ſhall it come upon all them that dwell upon the face of the earth (Luk. 21. 34, 35.)* We hear therefore how many watch-words and caveats our Saviour giveth us, when he ſaith, Be in readineſs, awake, take heed, watch and pray, and look about you, leſt that day come ſuddenly upon you, and take you napping. It ſtandeth us all therefore upon, to be at an hours warning, upon pain of death, and as we will anſwer it at our uttermoſt peril.

Phil. *Proceed to ſpeak of the torments of Hell.*

Theol. Concerning the torments of hell, I do note three

three things, which I will briefly ſpeak of, and they be theſe: The extremity, perpetuity, and remedileſneſs thereof: Firſt, touching the extremity thereof, it ſtandeth ſpecially in theſe three things. Firſt, that it is a ſeperation from all Joy and comfort of the Preſence of God. Secondly, that it is an eternal fellowſhip with the Devil and his Angels.

Thirdly, it is a feeling of the horrible wrath of God, which ſhall ſeize upon body and ſoul, and ſhall feed on them (as fire doth upon pitch and brimſtone) for ever. The Scriptures doth note the extremity of it, in calling it, *A lake that burns with fire and brimſtone for ever*; (*Apoc.* 21. 8.) in ſaying, *There ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*; (*Luk.* 13. 28.) in affirming, that *their worm dyeth not*, *Mat.* 8. 12. (meaning the worm that gnaweth their conſcience, or the torment of conſcience) *and the fire never goeth out*; in terming it, *Tophet, which is deep and large, and the burning thereof is fire and much wood: and that the breath of the Lord, as a river of brimſtone, doth kindle it.* All theſe things be terrible to our ſenſes, and yet can they not fully expreſs the thing as it is indeed. For no heart can conceive, or tongue expreſs, the greatneſs and extremity of the torments of Hell. As the joyes of Heaven never entred into the heart of man; no more did the torments of Hell All the torments and troubles that fall upon men in this life, are but the ſparkles of the furnace of Gods total wrath. All fires are but as it were pictures of fire, in compariſon of Hell-fire. For as one writeth. Hell-fire is ſo extreamly hot; that it will burn up a man ſeven miles before he come at it. Yet the Reprobates being alwaies in it, ſhall never be conſumed of it.

As the Salamander is alwayes in the fire, and never conſumeth; ſo the wicked ſhall be alwayes in the fire of Hell, and never conſume. For Hell is a death alwaies living, and an end alwayes beginning. It is a grievous thing to a man that is very ſick, to lye along upon a feather-bed, how much more upon a hot gridiron? but how moſt of all to burn alwayes in Hell fire, and never be conſumed? Another extremity of it con-

conſiſteth in this, that the torments of Hell are univerſal; that is, in every member at once, head, eyes, tongue, teeth, throat, ſtomach, back, belly, heart, ſides, &c. All puniſhments of this life are particular; for ſome are pained in their head, ſome in their back, ſome in ſtomach, &c. yet ſome particular pains are ſuch as a man would not ſuffer to gain all the world. But for a man to be tormented in all parts at once, what ſight more lamentable? who could but take pity of a dog in the ſtreet in that caſe?

Thus then we ſee, that the extremity of Hell torments is greater than can be conceived or uttered. For who can utter that which is incomprehenſible? We can go no further in comprehending that which is incomprehenſible, than to know it to be incomprehenſible.

Phil. *As you have ſhewed us the extremity of Hell-torments, ſo now proceed to the perpetuity.*

Theol. The Scriptures do ſet forth the pepetuity of Hell-torments, in ſaying, they are for ever. The wicked *ſhall be caſt into the Lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone for ever.* The fire never goeth out. When as many hundred thouſand years are expired, as there be ſtones by the Sea-ſide, yet ſtill there be ſo many more to come. For that which hath no end, can never come to an end. If all the Arithmeticians in the world were ſet a work, to do nothing but number all the dayes of their life, even the greateſt numbers that they could poſſibly ſet down, and ſhould in the end add all their numbers together, yet could they never come any thing near to that length of time wherein the wicked ſhall be tormented.

If the whole circumference of the Heavens were written about with figures of Arithmetick, from the Eaſt to the Weſt; and from the Weſt to the Eaſt again; yet could it not contain that infinite time, and innumerable years, wherein all unbelievers ſhall ſuffer eternal torture. For in things infinite, time hath no place. For time is the meaſure of thoſe things which are ſubject to meaſure. Therefore becauſe Hell torments are infinite, they cannot be meaſured by any time;

time; neither can that which is infinite be diminiſhed. For if you ſubſtract from that which is infinite, ten thouſand thouſand millions of millions, yet is it thereby nothing diminiſhed, or made leſs.

Put caſe a man ſhould once in an hundred thouſand years take a ſpoonful of water out of the great Ocean Sea, how long would it be ere he had ſo emptied it? Yet ſhall a man ſooner empty the Sea, by taking a ſpoonful once in an hundred thouſand years, than the damned ſoul ſhall have any eaſe. Therefore a certain Writer ſaith, *If the damned ſoul might be tormented in Hell but a thouſand years, and then have eaſe, there were ſome comfort in it: (for then there would be hope it would come to an end) but*, ſaith he, *this word* Ever, *killeth the heart* O conſider this, ye that forget God, O ye carnal Worldlings, think on this in time. For if you will not now be moved in the hearing, you ſhall then be cruſhed in pieces in feeling.

What availeth it to live in all poſſible pleaſures and carnal delights here for ſome ſixty years, and then to ſuffer this eternal toment? *what ſhall it profit a man to win the whole world, and loſe his ſoul?* They be more than mad, which will hazzard their ſoul for a little profit, and a few ſtinking pleaſures. But this is the manner of men; they will have the preſent ſweet, (come of it what will) though they pay never ſo dear for it, though they go to the higheſt price: though they loſe their ſouls for it. Oh the unſpeakable blindeneſs and madneſs of the men of this world! The Devil hath put out their eyes, and therefore leadeth them whether he liſts. For who cannot lead a blinde man whether he liſts? *Nahaſh* the *Ammonite* would make no covenant with the *Iſraelites*, (1 *Sam.* 11. 2.) but upon condition that he might put out all their right eyes. So the Devil doth covenant with all the wicked, to put out both their eyes, that he may lead them directly into Hell.

Phil. *Now, Sir, a word or two more of the remedileſneſs of Hell-fire.*

Theol. The Scriptures do affirm, that as the torments

ments of Hell are extream, ſo they are without all hope of remedy: as it is written, *A man can by no means redeem his brother; he cannot give his ranſome unto God; ſo precious is the redemption of the ſoul, and the continuance for ever.* (*Pſ* 49. 7, 8.) To this purpoſe *Abraham* ſaid to the rich man, being in Hell-torments, *Betwixt you and us there is a great gulph ſet, ſo that they which would go from hence to you, cannot; neither can they come from thence to us.* (*Luk.* 16. 26.) Our Lord Jeſus alſo ſaith, *What ſhall a man give for the recompence of his ſoul?* (*Mat.* 16. 26.) Where our Saviour doth plainly affirm, that there is no ranſome or recompence, though never ſo great, to be given for a damned ſoul. For the Soul being in Hell, can never be releaſed, it is paſt remedy, no means whatſoever can do any good; no; no gold, no ſilver, no friends, no riches, no power, no policy, no flattery, no bribery, no reach, no fetch or device whatſoever, can prevail one jot: for a man being once in Hell, hath no remedy; he is in cloſe priſon; he is ſhut up under the hatches for ever; there is no getting out again; he muſt ſuffer perpetual impriſonment. He cannot bring a Writ of falſe impriſonment, becauſe he is laid in by the moſt righteous and juſt Judge, who cannot poſſibly do any wrong, but he muſt lye by it. For being there once, he is there for ever. If all the Angels of Heaven ſhould intreat for a damned ſoul; if *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob* ſhould make great ſuit; if all the Prophets, Apoſtles, and Martyrs ſhould be continual ſolicitors to Chriſt for releaſe; if the Father ſhould make requeſt for his ſon, or the Mother for the Daughter, yet can none of theſe be heard; they muſt all have the repulſe. For the ſentence of Chriſt cannot be reverſed, his decree his unrepealable. The due conſideration of all theſe things may make all hearts to quake, and all knees to tremble. In the troubles and afflictions of this life, though a man come in never ſo great danger, yet he may wind out again by one means or another, by money, or friendſhip, or rewards, or ſuch like means: but in Hell-fire,

fire, this it is that gripes and maketh the heart deſpair, that there is no remedy at all to be uſed. If we ſhould ask of a damned ſoul, or an afflicted conſcience, what they would give for the eaſe and redemption of their ſouls, they would anſwer, The whole world: howſoever ſecure worldlings and wicked Atheiſts (which ſee nothing, or feel nothing) make nothing of it.

Here, by the way, let us conſider the greatneſs of the loſs of man's ſoul; which we ſhall the better perceive and ſee into, if we can aright value and prize the ſoul. If therefore it be demanded what is the price of the Soul, or what is it worth? Our Lord Jeſus anſwereth, that it is more worth than all the world. For, ſaith he, *What ſhall it profit a man to win all the world, and loſe his ſoul?* (*Mat.* 26. 26.) Therefore the ſoul of the pooreſt beggar is more worth than all the world. Then I reaſon thus: If the ſoul be more worth than all the world, then the loſs of it is greater than the loſs of the whole world. For indeed it is a loſs of all loſſes, an unrecoverable loſs. If a man ſhould have his houſe burnt over his head, and all that he hath conſumed in one night, it were a great loſs. If a Merchant-venturer ſhould loſe twenty thouſand pounds in one venture, in one ſhip, or (as they ſay) in one bottom, it were a very great loſs. If a King ſhould loſe his Crown and Kingdom, it were an exceeding great loſs. But the loſs of the ſoul is a thouſand times more than all theſe, it is a matter of infinite importance. If a Tenant be caſt out of the favour of his Land-lord, it is a matter of grief. If a Noble man's Secretary be caſt out of favour with his Lord, ſo that he taketh a pritch againſt him, it is a matter of great ſorrow. If a noble man himſelf be diſcountenanced, and caſt out of all favour with his Prince, that was in great favour, it is a corſie, a heart-ſmart, and a matter of exceeding grievance. But to be eternally ſeparated from God, to be ſhut out of his favour, and to be caſt away from his preſence, and the preſence of his Angels, is a matter of

infi-

infinite more dolour and torment. Mark then and behold what a thing it is for a man to loſe his ſoul. Oh therefore that men would be wiſe in God's fear, that they would look out in time, and make proviſion for their ſouls. Now then, to cloſe up this whole point: the ſum of all that hath been ſaid is this, That the torments of Hell are endleſs eaſeleſs and remedileſs.

Aſun. *The laying open of theſe doctrines of Hell-fire, and the judgment to come, makes me quake and tremble: I am much thereby perplexed, I feel great terrour in my conſcience, I am afraid I ſhall be damned.*

Antil. *Damned, man! what ſpeak you of damning? I am aſhamed to hear you ſay ſo. For it is well known that you are an honeſt man, a quiet liver, a good neighbours and as good a townſ-man as any in the Pariſh where you dwell, and you have been alwaies ſo reputed and taken. If you ſhould be damned, I know not who ſhall be ſaved.*

Aſun. *I regard not your flatteries. I believe God, I believe his Word; I believe thoſe things which Maſter* Theologus *hath alledged out of the Holy Scriptures, pointing me both to the Chapter and the Verſe: and whether it be more meet that I ſhould believe the Scriptures, or your ſoothings, judge you. No, no; now I do clearly ſee, by the glaſs of God's Law, that my ſtate is wretched and miſerable. For I have lived in ſin and ignorance all the days of my life, being utterly void of all Religion and true knowledge of God. I am not the man indeed that you and others take me for. For though outwardly I have lived honeſtly to the world-ward, yet inwardly I have not lived religiouſly to God-ward.*

Antil. *Tuſh, tuſh; now I ſee you are in a melancholy humour. If you will go home with me, I can give you a ſpeedy remedy, for I have many pleaſant and merry books, which if you ſhould hear them read, would ſoon remedy you of this melancholy humour. I have the Court of* Venus, *the Palace of pleaſure,* Bevis *of South-hampton,* Ellen *of* Rummin, *The merry jeſt of the Fryer and the Boy, The pleaſant ſtory of* Clem *of the* Clough, Adam Bell, *and* William *of* Cloudeſly, *The old tale of* William, Richard

and

and Humphry, *The pretty conceit of* John Splinter's *laſt Will and Teſtament; which all are excellent and ſingular books againſt heart-qualms, and to remove ſuch dumpiſhneſs as I ſee you are now fallen into.*

Aſun. *Your vain and frivolous Books of tales, jeſts, and lies, would more increaſe my grief, and ſtrike the print of ſorrow deeper into my heart.*

Antil. *Nay, if you be of that mind, I have done with you.*

Phil. *I pray you, if a man may be ſo bold with you, how came you by all theſe good Books? I ſhould have ſaid, ſo much traſh and rubbiſh,*

Antil. *What mattereth it to you? what have you to do to enquire? But, I pray you, Sir, what do you meant call them traſh and rubbiſh?*

Phil. *Becauſe they be no better. They be goodly geere, trim ſtuff! They are good to kindle a fire, or to ſcour an hot Oven withal. And ſhall I tell you my opinion of them? I do thus think, that they are deviſed by the Devil, ſeen and allowed by the Pope, printed in Hell, bound up by Hobgoblin, and firſt publiſhed and diſperſed in* Rome, Italy, *and* Spain; *and all to this end, that thereby men might be kept from the reading of the Scriptures. For even as a Lapwing with her buſie cry draweth men away from her neſt, ſo the Popiſh generation, by theſe fabulous devices, draw men from the Scriptures.*

Antil. *Ah, Sir, I ſee now a fool's bolt is ſoon ſhot. You are more preciſe than wiſe, the Vicar of Saint Fools ſhall be your ghoſtly Father. What tell you me of your opinion? I would you ſhould well know, I neither regard you nor your opinion. There be wiſer men than you, who both read, allow, and take pleaſure in theſe Books.*

Theol. Let him alone, good *Philagathus*, for you ſee what he is, there is no end of his croſſing and cavilling. But he that is ignorant let him be ignorant, and he that is filthy, let him be more filthy. Let us now turn our Speech to *Aſunetus*, for I ſee he is heavy-hearted, and troubled in his mind. How do you, *Aſunetus?* how do you feel your ſelf? Methinks you are very ſad.

Aſun. *I am the better for you, Sir, I thank God: I never knew what ſin meant till this day. It hath pleaſed God now to give me ſome ſight and feeling thereof. I am greatly diſtreſſed in my conſcience to think what I have been. The remembrance of my former ſins do ſtrike an horrour into me. When I conſider how ignorantly and profanely, and how far off from God I have lived all my life, it ſtings and gripes me to the heart. I do now ſee that which I never ſaw, and feel that which I never felt. I do plainly ſee, that if I had dyed in that ſtate wherein I have lived all my life, I ſhould certainly have been condemned, and ſhould have periſhed for ever in my ſin and ignorance.*

Theol. I am very glad that God hath opened your eyes, and given you the ſight and feeling of your miſery; which indeed is the very firſt ſtep to Eternal Life. It is a great favour and ſpecial mercy of God towards you, that he hath ſo touched your heart, you can never be thankful enough for it. It is more than if you had a million of Gold given you. It is the only rare priviledge of God's Elect, to have the eyes of their Souls opened, that they may ſee into heavenly and ſpiritual things. As for the world, it is juſt with God to leave them in their blindneſs.

Aſun. *I do feel the burthen of my ſins: I am greatly grieved for them. I am weary of them. I am ſorry that ever I ſinned againſt God, or that I ſhould be ſuch a wretch, as to incur his diſpleaſure, and provoke his Majeſty againſt me. But I pray you, good Maſter* Theologus, *ſith you are a ſpiritual Phyſitian, and I am ſick of ſin, that you would miniſter unto me out of God's Word, ſome ſpiritual phyſick and comfort.*

Theol. Truly, I muſt needs think, that the promiſes of mercy, and forgiveneſs of ſin made in the Goſpel, do belong unto you, and that Jeſus Chriſt is yours; that you are truly intereſted in him, and have a proper right unto him. For he came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance. You do now feel your ſelf to be a ſinner; you are grieved for your ſins; you are weary of them; therefore Jeſus Chriſt

Chriſt is for you, all the benefits of his paſſion belong to you. Again he ſaith, *The whole need not the Phyſitian but they that are ſick. Mat.* 9. 12. But you do acknowledge your ſelf to be ſick of ſin; therefore Jeſus Chriſt will be your Phyſitian: he will ſwaddle you, he will lap you; he will bind up all your ſores; he will heall all your wounds; he will anoint them with the oyl of his mercy; he will ſmile upon you, and ſhew you a joyful countenance; he will ſay unto you, your ſins are forgiven.

In him you ſhall have reſt and peace to your ſoul. Through him you ſhall have eaſe and comfort. For he takes pity of all ſuch as mourn for their ſins as you do. He biddeth you, and all that are in your caſe, to come unto him, and he will help you. *Come unto me* (ſaith he) *all you that are weary and heavy laden, and I will eaſe you.* (*Mat.* 11. 28.) You are one of them that are bidden to come, for you are weary of your ſins: you feel the burthen of them. Chriſt is altogether for ſuch as you are. He regardeth not the world, that is, the prophane and unregenerate men. He bids not them come; he prayeth not for them. I *pray not for the world* (ſaith he) (*Joh.* 17. 9.) They have no part nor intereſt in him. They have nothing to do with him, or with his merits and righteouſneſs. He is only for the penitent ſinner, and ſuch as mourn for their ſins. He is a Pillow of Down to all aching heads, and aching conſciences. Be of good comfort therefore, fear nothing: for aſſuredly Chriſt and all his righteouſneſs is yours. He will cloath you with it. He will never impute your ſins unto you, or lay any of them to your charge; though they be ſo many, or ſo great; he will forget them, and forgive them as he ſaith by the Prophet *Eſay*, *Though your ſin were as crimſon, they ſhall be made as white as ſnow: though they were red like ſcarlet, they ſhall be as wool.* (*Iſay.* 1. 28.) And again, he ſaith by the ſame Prophet, I *have put away thy tranſgreſſions as thick as Clouds, and thy ſins as a miſt.* (*Iſa.* 44. 22.) By another Prophet he ſaith, *He will lay aſide our iniquities, and caſt all our*

ſins unto the bottom of the Sea. (*Mic.* 7. 19.) Again he ſaith by the Prophet *Eſay*, *I, even* I, *am he that put away thine iniquities for my own ſake, and will not remember thy ſins.* (*Iſa.* 43. 25.) And yet more ſweetly he ſpeaks to us by the Prophet *Jeremy*, ſaying, *Turn again unto me, and* I *will not let my wrath fall upon you. For* I *am merciful, and will not alway keep mine anger.* (*Jer.* 3. 12.) And again by the Prophet *Hoſea* he ſaith, I *will not execute the fierceneſs of my wrath,* I *will not return to deſtroy Ephraim*; *for* I *am* GOD, *and not man.* (*Hoſ.* 11. 9.) Be of good chear therefore, comfort your ſelf with theſe promiſes: you have cauſe to rejoyce, ſeeing GOD hath wrought in you a diſlike and a grief for your ſins, which is a certain token that your ſins ſhall never hurt you; for ſins paſt cannot hurt us, if ſins preſent do not like us. You are grown to an hatred and diſlike of your ſins, you mourn under the burden of them, therefore you are bleſſed. For *bleſſed are they that mourn.* Why therefore ſhould you be ſo heavy and ſad? Remember what St. *John* ſaith, *If any man ſin, we have an Advocate, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the reconciliation for our ſins.* (1 *Joh.* 2. 1.) St. *Paul* ſaith, that *Jeſus Chriſt is ſet forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.* (*Rom.* 3. 2, 5.) Again the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *He is perfectly able to ſave all thoſe that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for us.* (*Heb.* 7. 25.) The Apoſtle ſaith, *He is made of God for us; wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption.* (1 *Cor.* 1. 30.) Mark that he ſaith, All is for us, all is for his Church, for every member of his Church, and therefore for you: Chriſt is made of God righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption for you: Chriſt is your Mediator, and your high Prieſt, and hath offered up the everlaſting ſacrifice, even for you, that he might pay your ranſome, and redeem you from all iniquity. *By his own blood hath he entred once into the holy place, and obtained eternal redemption for you.* (*Heb.* 9. 12.) Chriſt is not entred into the Holy places which are made with hands, which are ſimili-

tudes

tudes of the true Sanctuary, but is entred into the very Heaven, to appear now in the ſight of God for you. *Heb.* 9. 24. The Apoſtle ſaith, *He hath made him to be ſin for you, that knew no ſin, that you might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him,* (2 *Cor.* 5. 21.) *Chriſt was made a curſe for you, that he might redeem you from the curſe of the Law.* (*Gal.* 3. 13.) Oh therefore how happy art thou that haſt ſuch a Mediator and high Prieſt! Reſt therefore wholly upon him and upon that perfect, eternal, and propitiatory ſacrifice which he hath once offered. Apply Chriſt, apply his merits, apply the promiſes to your ſelf, and to your own conſcience, ſo ſhall they do you good, and bring great comfort to your ſoul. For put caſe you had a moſt excellent and ſoveraign ſalve, which would cure any wound, if it were laid to; yet if you ſhould lock it up in your cheſt, and never apply it to your wound. what good could it do you? Even ſo the righteouſneſs and merits of Chriſt, are a ſpiritual Salve, which will cure any wound of the ſoul; but if we do not apply them to our ſouls by faith, they can do us no good. You muſt therefore apply Chriſt and all the promiſes of the Goſpel, to your ſelf by faith, and ſtand fully perſwaded that whatſoever he hath done upon the croſs, he hath done for you particularly. For what is juſtifying faith, but a full perſwaſion of God's particular love to us in Chriſt? the general and confuſed knowledge of Chriſt and his Goſpel, avails not to eternal life. Labour therefore to have the true uſe of all theſe great and precious promiſes, and ſtick faſt to Chriſt: for through him only we have remiſſion of ſins, and eternal Life, *To him all the Prophets give witneſs* (ſaith Saint *Peter*) *that through his Name all that believe ſhall receive remiſſion of their ſins.* (*Act.* 10. 43.) Where the Apoſtle tells us, that if a great Jury of Prophets were pannelled to teſtifie of the way and means to eternal Life, they would all, with one conſent, bring in a verdict, that remiſſion of ſins and eternal life, are only in Chriſt: Let us hear the fore-man ſpeak, and one or two of the reſt;

for in the mouth of two or three witneſſes, ſhall every word ſtand, the Prophet *Eſay* ſaith, *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was broken for our iniquities the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him, and with his ſtripes we are healed.* (*Iſa.* 53. 5.) This great Prophet we ſee plainly affirms, that Chriſt ſuffered for our ſins, and by his ſufferings we are ſaved. The Prophet *Jeremy* teſtifies the ſame thing, ſaying, *Behold the day is come (ſaith the Lord) that I will raiſe to David a righteous branch, and a King ſhall rain and proſper, and ſhall execute Juſtice and Judgment in the earth. In thy days Judah ſhall be ſaved, and Iſrael ſhall dwell ſafely: and this is the name whereby they ſhall call him, The Lord our righteouſneſs.* (*Jer.* 23. 5.) This Prophet jumps with the other: For Chriſt (he ſaith) that is the righteous branch, and that he is our righteouſneſs: which is all one, as if he had ſaid, Our ſins are pardoned only through him, and through him we are made righteous. Moreover, he affirms, that *Judah* and *Iſrael*, that is, the Church ſhall be ſaved by him. The Prophet *Zachary*, that I may ſpeak it with reverence, telleth the ſame tale, word for word. He avoucheth the ſame thing with the other two Prophets; for he ſaith, *In that day a fountain ſhall be opened to the houſe of David, and to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, for ſin and for uncleanneſs.* (*Zac.* 13. 1.) The meaning of the Prophet is, that in the days of Chriſt's Kingdom, the fountain of God's mercy in Chriſt, ſhould be opened and let out to waſh away the ſins and uncleanneſs of the Church, So then we ſee that theſe three great witneſſes do all agree in this, that through Chriſt only we are waſhed from our ſins, and through him only we are made righteous, ſeeing then that Eternal Life is only in the Son, therefore he that hath the Son, hath Life. Be of good courage therefore, O *Aſunetus*, for no doubt you have the Son, and therefore eternal life. Fear not your ſins, for they cannot hurt you: For all the righteouſneſs of *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, and all the moſt righteous men that ever lived on the face of the earth, if it were yours, could do you no good without

out Christ: so all the sin in the world can do you no hurt being in Christ; *For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*, (*Rom.* 8. 1.) Pluck up a good heart therefore, be no more heavy and sad; for if you be found in Christ, cloathed with his perfect righteousness, (being made yours through faith) what can the Devil say to you? what can the Law do? They may well hiss at you, but they cannot sting you; (*Rom.* 8. 33, 34.) they may grin at you, but they cannot hurt you. For who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifies, who shall condemn? It is Christ which is dead, or rather which is risen again; who also sitteth at the right hand of GOD, (*Phil.* 4. 4.) and makes request for us. Rejoyce in the Lord therefore; again, I say, rejoyce: for greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. Our Lord Jesus is stronger than all. None can pluck you out of his hands: he is a strong *Mediator*; he hath conquered all our spiritual enemies: he hath overcome Hell, Death, and Damnation: he hath led captivity captive: (*Col.* 2. 15.) he hath spoiled principalities and powers, and hath made an open shew of them, and triumphed over them on his Cross. He hath most triumphantly said, *O death, I will be thy death: O grave, will be thy destruction.* (*Hos.* 13. 14.) *O death where is thy sting? O Hell, where is thy victory?* (1 *Cor.* 15. 55.) Seeing then you have such a Mediator and high Priest, as hath conquered the hellish army, and subdued all infernal power, what need you to doubt? what need you to fear any more? Moreover, you are to understand, and to be perswaded that God's mercy is exceeding great towards penitent sinners, and all such as mourn for their transgressions: according as he saith: *At what time soever a sinner doth repent him of his sins from the bottom of his heart, he will put them all out of his remembrance.* The Prophet *David* doth most lively and fully describe unto us, the merciful nature of God, in the 103 Psalm, where he saith, *The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger, and of great kindness: he will not always chide, neither keepeth his*

anger for ever: he hath not dealt with us after our ſins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities: For as high as the Heaven is above the Earth, ſo great is his mercy towards thoſe that fear him. As far as is the Eaſt from the Weſt, ſo far he hath removed our ſins from us. As a Father hath compaſſion on his Children, ſo hath the Lord compaſſion on them that fear him. For he knows whereof we be made, he remembreth we are but duſt. The Hiſtory of the loſt Son doth moſt notably ſet forth the wonderful mercy of God towards penitent ſinners. There is ſhewed how the Lord doth embrace, tender, and make much of ſuch poor ſinners, as have broken and contrite hearts for their ſins: (*Luk.* 15. 20.) for it is ſaid, that when the Father ſaw his repenting Son a great way off, he had compaſſion on him, and ran and fell on his neck, and kiſſed him, and cloathed him with the beſt robe, put it on him, put a ring on his hand, and ſhoes on his feet, and cauſed the fat calf to be killed for him. Even ſo the everlaſting Father doth rejoyce at the converſion of any of his loſt Sons. Yea, there is joy in the preſence of the Angels of God for one ſinner that converteth. Moreover, the Lord moſt lively expreſſeth his merciful nature and diſpoſition in this; That he is very loth we ſhould periſh, and willingly caſt away our ſelves. Therefore often in the holy Scriptures he mourns for us, bewails our wretchedneſs, and takes up many pitiful complaints and lamentations for us, ſaying, *O that my people had hearkned unto me, and Iſrael had walked in my ways.* (*Pſal.* 81: 13.) And again, *O that thou hadſt hearkned unto my Commandments; then had thy proſperity been as the flood, and thy righteouſneſs as the waters of the Sea.* (*Iſa.* 48. 18.) Again, he mourningly complains by his Prophet *Hoſea*, ſaying, *O Ephraim, what ſhall* I *do to thee? O Judah, how ſhall* I *intreat thee?* And in another place. *What could* I *do more to my Vineyard that* I *have not done?* (*Iſa.* 5. 4.) Mark here how compaſſionately the Almighty God doth yern over us, and even as it were bleed upon our wounds, The Apoſtle alſo notes the rich

mercy

mercy and marvellous love of GOD to mankind in this, that he doth beſeech us, and pray us by the Miniſters of the Goſpel, that we would be reconciled unto unto him. The words are theſe; *Now then are we Ambaſſadors for Chriſt; as though God did beſeech you through us, we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, that you be reconciled unto God.* Is it not a ſtrange thing that the omnipotent God ſhould fall to entreating of us poor wretches? It is all one, as if a King ſhould entreat a Beggar, whom he may will and command. But the abundant mercy of GOD, towards mankind, doth moſt of all conſiſt in this, that he hath given his only Son for us, when we were his enemies, as it is written, (John 3. 14.) *God ſo loved the world, that he hath given his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believes on him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Again, *God ſets out his love towards us, ſeeing that while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt dyed for us, much more than being now juſtified by his blood, we ſhall be ſaved from wrath through him.* (Rom. 5. 10.) *For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we ſhall be ſaved by his life.* In all this then we may clearly behold the infinite mercy of God towards us poor ſinners. For is it not a great matter that the Son of God ſhould take our nature upon him, (*Phil.* 2. 8.) ſhould be ſo abaſed as he was, and ſhould humble himſelf to death, even to the death of the Croſs? For as the ſhadow of the dyal went back ten degrees, that *Ezekias* might receive length of daies, and much happineſs, ſo Chriſt the Son of Righteouſneſs, hath gone back many degrees, that we might have Eternal Life. His Humiliation therefore is our Exaltation, his ſufferings our joy, his death our Life. For we have no other remedy or refuge, but only his merits and righteouſneſs. He is our City of refuge, whether we muſt fly, and where we muſt take ſanctuary. (*Jer.* 46. 11.) He is the Balm of *Gilead*, whereby our Souls are cured. He is that pool of *Betheſda*, where every man may be cured, of what diſeaſe ſoever he hath. (*John*

5. 2.) He is the River *Jordan*, where *Naaman* may wash away all his leprosie. (2 *King.* 5.) He is that Pelican, who by pecking a hole in his own breast, doth restore his young to life again by his blood. Yet one thing we must note by the way, which hath been partly touched before, That all the mercies of God, and merits of Christ are to be restrained only to the Elect, only to the true members of the Church, as plainly appeareth in *Psalm.* 103, where the mercies of God, which are there largely described, are restrained only to them that fear him, keep is covenant, and think upon his Commandments to do them. And touching Christ, it is said. That he is a Prince and a Saviour unto *Israel*, (*Ps.* 130. 8.) and that he shall redeem *Israel* from all his iniquities. Again, it is written, that Christ being consecrated, was made the *Author of eternal salvation, to them that obey him.* (*Heb.* 5. 9.) None do or can obey him, but only the elect therefore he is the Author of salvation onely to the Elect. And consequently, the profane world, whatsoever they say, whatsoever they brag and boast, have no true title, or interest in him. This thing was figured in the Law, in this, that the Mercy-seat, which was a type of God's mercy in Christ; (*Exod.* 25. 20.) and the Ark which was a figure of the Church, were by the express Commandment of God, fitted each to other, both in length and breadth. For as the Ark was two Cubits and an half long, and a Cubit and an half broad; just so was the Mercy-seat. Noting thereby, that the Mercy of God in Christ should only be fitted to his Church, and belong only to the Church, so as not one without the Church should be saved. For he that hath not the Church for his Mother, cannot have God for his Father. Lastly, we are to observe, that as God is infinite in mercy, and of great compassion toward penitent sinners, so also is he most constant in the course of his mercies towards his Children, And therefore one of the Psalms carries this foot, *His mercy endureth for ever, his mercy endureth for ever, his mercy endureth for ever.* (*Psal.* 136)

No-

Noting thereby both the conſtancy and eternity of God's mercy. To the ſame purpoſe it is thus written, *It is the Lord's mercy that we are not conſumed, it is becauſe his compaſſions fail not.* (*Lam.* 3. 22.) Let us know therefore, that God, as touching his mercy to his Children, is of a moſt conſtant and unchangeable nature. As he ſaith, *I am the Lord, I change not.* For if God were of a changeable nature, as we are, and ſubject to paſſions, then were we in a moſt miſerable caſe, then muſt he needs ſmite us down, and take vengeance of us every day, and every hour in the day, becauſe we provoke him every day, and every hour in the day. But the God of Heaven is not as a man, that he ſhould be ſubject to paſſions and affections; he is of a moſt conſtant and immutable nature. For though we provoke him every day with new ſins, yet he is ſo far off from taking revenge, that the next day he rewardeth us with new mercies, and breaketh through all our unkindneſs to ſhew kindneſs to us; and through all our naughtineſs to do us good. All our infirmities cannot make him break of with us, or ceaſe to love us. He is content to take us with all faults, and to love us dearly though we have great faults. He regardeth not our infirmities, though we be oftentimes wayward and elviſh, yet for all that he loveth us nevertheleſs. Even as a loving Mother, though her young ſuckling cry all the night, and be exceeding treaſe and wayward, ſo as ſhe cannot reſt an hour in the night; yea, though ſhe endure much loathſomneſs and trouble with it, yet in the morning when ſhe riſeth, ſhe loveth it never the leſs, but dandleth with it, playeth with it, ſmileth and laugheth upon it. So the God of all mercies, whoſe love towards us far paſſeth the love of mothers, though we grieve him with our infirmities continually, yet loveth us nevertheleſs, and is content to put up all, to forget, and forgive all; for he is a moſt conſtant lover. Where he once ſets and ſettles his love, he loveth moſt conſtantly, nothing can alter him, nothing can remove him. Even

as

as a Father, when his little child catcheth a fall, breaketh his ſhins, and hurteth his face, is ſo far from being offended or diſpleaſed with him therefore, that he doth pity him, and bemoan him, ſeeking remedies for his hurt: So our merciful Father is ſo far off from being angry and diſpleaſed with us for ſome ſlips and falls, that he doth the more pity us, and lament our caſe. Even as a loving and wife Husband, although his wife have many infirmities, yet being aſſured ſhe loves him dearly, and that her heart is with him, he is well content to wink at all her faults, and hide them, to bear with them; yea, and to make nothing of them, loving her no whit the leſs for them. So our dear Husband and Spouſe, Chriſt Jeſus, becauſe he knoweth we love him, and that he hath our hearts, is content to bear with all our infirmities, and to make light of them. For this cauſe it is, that he ſaith to his Spouſe in the *Canticles*, though ſhe was black, and full of infirmities, *Behold thou art all fair, my Love: Behold, thou art fair: thou art all fair, my Love, there is no ſpot in thee, Cant.* 4. 1, 7. Mark, that he calleth the Church, fair, all fair, and without ſpot; not becauſe ſhe was ſo in her ſelf, but becauſe ſhe was made ſo in him: and aſſuredly the eternal God, beholding her in his Son, doth ſo eſteem and account of her. For as he that beholdeth any thing through a red glaſs, doth take it to be red, as is the colour of the Glaſs, ſo God the Father beholding us in his Son, doth take us to be of the ſame nature and quality that he is, that is perfectly righteous. For this cauſe it is, that he loveth us, and ſetteth his heart upon us, and will not be removed from us. For his love to his children is alwaies one and the ſame, although we have not alwaies the like ſight and feeling of it: as the Moon is always the ſame in ſubſtance and quantity, though ſometimes it ſeemeth to us to be waſted into a very ſmall ſcantling. Let us know then, to our great comfort, that the love of God toward us in his dear Son, is conſtant, and alwaies alike: and that he will not diſcountenance us, or ſhake us off

for

for ſome infirmities, no nor yet for many infirmities: For the merciful God doth accept of his children, becauſe their general care is good, and the univerſal tenour of their life teedeth unto righteouſneſs; howſoever they may greatly fail in many particular actions. Two or three fits of an ague doth not prove a diſeaſed body; nor two or three good days a ſound body: even ſo ſome few infirmities do not argue a wicked man; nor two or three good actions a good name: but we muſt have an eye to the certain and ſetled courſe of a man's life: even as men are truly ſaid to walk in a way, when they go on in it, although ſometimes they trip and ſtumble: So God's Children do walk in the way of righteouſneſs, although they ſometimes ſtumble and ſtep out of it, or ſometimes be violently haled out of it by Thieves. For Satan and the violence of our luſts, do often hale us out of the way; but we muſt get into it again as ſoon as we are eſcaped. Now then to conclude and draw to an end: Sith God is ſo infinitely merciful, and conſtant in his mercy: ſith ſuch great and precious promiſes are made to us in Chriſt: ſith the Lord doth not regard our infirmities when our hearts are with him: therefore, O *Aſunetus*, be of good chear, let nothing trouble you; fear not the aſſaults of the Devil, regard not his temptations, for aſſuredly your ſins are forgiven. Chriſt is yours; Heaven is yours; and all the promiſes of life and ſalvation belong unto you. So as you need not doubt, you cannot miſcarry: your name is written in the Book of Life.

Aſun. I *am greatly comforted and cheared up with your words. Your preaching of the Goſpel, and laying open of God's abundant mercy in Chriſt, and of the Promiſes, do exceedingly revive me, and even as it were, put new life into me: they are as Sack and Sugar, unto my ſoul, and ſweeter than the honey and the honey-comb: They are as Phyſick to my ſick ſoul, and as oyntment to my ſpiritual wounds. I do now begin to ſee what miſery is in man, and what mercy is in God. And* I *know by woful experience, that where miſery is not felt, there mercy is not regarded:*

regarded: but now it hath pleaſed God to give me ſome feeling of my own wretchedneſs and miſery, and yet with good comfort in his mercy. For I thank God for it, I begin now to grow to ſome perſwaſion, that the promiſes do belong unto me, my ſins are forgiven, and that I *am one of them that ſhall be ſaved.*

Theol. I do greatly rejoyce, that God hath, according to his rich mercy, wrought this good work in you I do from the bottom of my heart, give him the praiſe and glory of it. Happy are you, that ever you were born, in whom the *Lord* hath wrought ſo gracious a work. It is his high favour and ſpecial mercy towards you: for it is the only priviledge and prerogative-royal of God's Children, truly to repent and believe. I beſeech God therefore to encreaſe your faith, and to fill you full of joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghoſt.

Antil. *The Sun draws low*: Aſunetus, *it is time for you and me to be going.*

Phil. *Indeed the night will approach by and by, and therefore we muſt of neceſſity break off.*

Theol. Sith it is ſo, we will here ſurceaſe and go no further.

Aſun. *Sir*, I *will now take my leave of you: I can never be thankful enough for all the good inſtructions and comforts which I have heard from you this day: I hope I ſhall remember ſome of them whilſt* I *live. I do therefore praiſe God for you, and for your counſel, and for this day, which* I *hope ſhall be the firſt day of my repentance, and true converſion unto God.*

Theol. The Lord for his infinite mercy ſake grant it, And I moſt humbly beſeech the Almighty God, to eſtabliſh you with his free Spirit, that you may proceed and go forward in a Chriſtian courſe unto the end.

Phil. *I pray you, good Maſter* Theologus, *pardon my boldneſs, for you ſee I have been very bold to propound many queſtions unto you, wherein you have fully ſatisfied me, to the great joy and comfort of my ſoul,* I *do therefore*

praiſe

praise God for you, and I hope I shall never forget some things you have uttered. But I will now commend you to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build us further.

Theol. Farewel good *Philagathus.* The Lord bless you and keep you in all your waies; and the God of Heaven preserve us all, and continue us in his fear unto the end.

All Glory be given to God.

---

20 MA 59

A Table, containing all the principal matters handled in this Book, and directing to the Page where they are ſet down.

Page

MAn's natural corruption. 3
Mans miſery in nature. 4
Mans nature corrupted, but not deſtroyed by Adam's *fall.* *ibid.*
Some ſparks of God's image ſtill remain after the fall. *ibid.*
Man in the ſtate of nature cannot do any thing that pleaſeth God. 5
Man naturally neither ſees nor feels his miſery. *Ibid.*
Man in nature is under the Tyranny of Satan, and curſe of the Law. 6
Man growing to years, living and dying in the ſtate of nature, periſheth for ever. 7
Man continueth curſed till he be born again. *ib.*
None can be ſaved, but only the regenerate. 8
Regeneration, what. *ib.*
The quality of Regeneration. 9
Remnants of ſin after regeneration. *ib.*
Regeneration unperfect in this life. *ib.*
Means of regeneration. 15

Page

Eight infallible ſigns of ſalvation. 19
Eight manifeſt ſigns of condemnation. 20
Nine manifeſt tokens of damnation. *ibid.*
Pride deſcribed. 21
Pride of gifts condemned. 22
Pride in apparel condemned. 26
Rules of the Word for apparel. 32, 33, 34.
Whoredom, and the danger thereof. 35
Excuſes of Whoredom. 36
Fearful effects of whoredom. 37
The puniſhment of whoredom. 38
Six wounds of Whoredom. 39
Five cauſes of whoredom. 41
Six remedies againſt whoredom. 43
Covetouſneſs, what *ib.*
Wherein it doth conſiſt. 44
Four notes of covetouſneſs. 45
Two cauſes of covetouſneſs. *ibid.*
Evil effects of covetouſneſs. 46

Va-

Vanity of the world, and worldly things. 48
Excuſes of covetouſneſs. 58.
Two remedies againſt covetouſneſs. 63, 64.
Gods providence for his children. *ibid.*
Gods bleſſing is all in all. 68
Outward means uphold not. *ib.*
Gods children ſometimes in great diſtreſs. 69
But always ſure to be delivered. 72
Great Priviledges of Gods children. 73
Contempt of the Goſpel, a grievous ſin. 77
Its puniſhment. *ibid.*
The ſin of this age 79
And a ſure ſign of Wrath to to the Land. 84
Swearing, a ſin of reprobation. 88
Its puniſhment. 90
Six common oaths. 91
Excuſes for ſwearing. 93
Cauſes of ſwearing. 95
Remedies againſt ſwearing. *ibid.*
Lying, flattering, and diſſembling. 96
Puniſhments for lying. 100
Excuſes for lying. 102
Cauſes of lying. *ib.*
Remedies againſt lying. *ib.*
Drunkenneſs and its evil effects. 103
Excuſes of drunkenneſs. 106
Cauſes of drunkenneſs. *ibid.*
Remedies againſt drunkenneſs. *ib.*
Idleneſs and its woful effects. 107
Four cauſes why man ſhould labour. 110
Cauſes of idleneſs. 113
Remedies againſt idleneſs, 114
Oppreſſion, a moſt horrible ſin. *ib.*
Woes denounced againſt Oppreſſours. 115
Sundry kinds of Oppreſſions. *ibid.*
Commands againſt Oppreſſion. 116
Cauſes of oppreſſion. 124
Remedies of oppreſſion. *ib.*
Sin hurtful in bodies, goods and name. 126
Dangerous to the whole Land. 130
Nine predictions of wrath. 132, 133.
Prayers of the faithful a ſtop to God's wrath, 134
Prayers of the Elect, of great force. 135
The wicked fare the better for God's children. 141
How to prevent God's wrath. *ibid.*
Ten things concerning our peace. 145
Nine ſigns of a ſound ſoul. 146
St. Peter's *eight marks of ſalvation.* *ibid.*

Seven tokens of salvation. 147
Assurance of salvation proved. 148
Objections against it answered. *ibid.*
Ground-work of our salvation. 149
Some doubts may stand with the assurance of faith. 150
Assurance of salvation, no presumption. 151
The wicked cannot be assured. 152
Security of Salvation, which the wicked brag of, is vain. 153
Nine things requisite for Salvation. 158
Many hope to be saved by Christ, but few can give a reason why Christ dyed for them particularly. 157
Few shall be saved, proved by Scriptures, Reasons, and Examples. 162
Few saved in the visible Church. 163
Objections against it answered. 164
Objections of unbelievers answered. 165
Reading much commended. 169
Deferring Repentance dangerous. 173
Man the cause of his condemnation. *ibid.*
Objections against predestination answered. 174
God's Decree no cause of Adam's fall. 176
Seven decrees of God. *ib.*
The decree of reprobation proved. 177
Prescience in God; what *ibid.*
The Decree of Election proved. 178
Causes of election in God himself. *ibid.*
Foreseen faith and works; no motives of salvation. 179
Faith depends on election, not election on faith. *ib.*
Why there are no ends of cavilling. 182
Nine gates into Hell. 183
The ignorance of worldly men. 188
Their answers to the grounds of Religion. 193
How to get out of ignorance. 201, 202.
Ignorance a most dangerous thing. *ibid.*
The charge of Ministers weighty; and carefully to be observed. 203
The best course whereby Ministers may bring the people out of ignorance. 205
The peoples best course to free themselves from sin and Satan. 208
Preaching necessary to eternal life. 210

The

The want of it dangerous to ſouls. 211
Satans cunning, in making all preaching utterly unprofitable. 212
The Preachers counſel to the ignorant man. 213
Six great dangers in Sin. 214
Six moſt fearful events of Sin. ib.
God in all ages hath ſeverely puniſhed the tranſgreſſors of his Law. 215, 216.
Every ſin, though ſeemingly ſmall to us, is hainous; becauſe againſt a perſon of infinite Majeſty. 216
Nine profitable conſiderations. 217
God's deeds are better than words. 218
Nine things much to be thought upon. 219
The deſcription of Chriſt's coming to judgment. 220
The terror, the ſuddenneſs, the end, the manner, and the uſe of Chriſt's ſecond coming deſcribed. 221
The torments of Hell, with the extremity, perpetuity, and remedileſneſs thereof deſcribed. 226,227, 228.
The ignorant man upon the hearing of the day of judgment and hell fire laid open, is pricked in his conſcience, bewails his former life; repents earneſtly for his ſin and ignorance, and deſires ſpiritual Phyſick and comfort of the Preacher. 231, 232, 233, 234.
The Prophet miniſters unto him much ſpiritual comfort, and doth, in ample manner, lay open unto him all the ſweet promiſes of the Goſpel, and the infinite mercy of God in Chriſt, to all true, penitent and broken-hearted Sinners. 235, to 246
The ignorant man being afflicted in his conſcience, is exceedingly comforted with the hearing of God's abundant mercy preached unto him, and thereupon gathers great inward peace, converts unto God with all his heart, and exceedingly bleſſeth God for the Preachers counſel. 246, 247

FINIS.

A Morning Prayer, to be uſed in private *FAMILIES.*

O Lord our God, and heavenly Father, we thy unworthy children do here come into thy moſt holy and heavenly preſence, to give thee praiſe and glory, for all thy great mercies and manifold bleſſings towards us, eſpecially for that thou haſt preſerved us this night paſt, from all the dangers and fears thereof; haſt given us quiet reſt to our bodies, and brought us now ſafely to the beginning of this day, and doſt now afreſh renew all thy mercies upon us, as the Eagle reneweth her Bill; giving us all things abundantly to enjoy; as food, rayment, health, peace, liberty, and freedom from many miſeries, diſeaſes, caſualties, and calamities which we are ſubject to in this life every minute of an hour: and not only ſo, but alſo for vouchſafing unto us many good things, not only for neceſſity but even for delight alſo. But above all (dear Father) we praiſe thy name for the bleſſings of a better life; eſpecially for thy moſt holy Word and Sacraments, and all the good we enjoy thereby; for the continuance of the Goſpel amongſt us, for the death of thy Son, and all that happineſs which we have thereby; alſo becauſe thou haſt choſen us to life before we were, and that of thy meer goodneſs and undeſerved favour towards us; and haſt called us in thine appointed time, juſtified us by thy grace, and ſanctified us by thy Spirit, and adopted us to be thine own children, and Heirs apparent to the great Crown. O Lord open our eyes every day more and more, to ſee & conſider of thy great and marvellous love to us in all theſe things; that by the due conſideration thereof, our hearts may be drawn yet nearer unto thee, even more to love thee, fear thee, and obey thee; that as thou art enlarged towards us in mercy, ſo we may be enlarged towards thee in thankſgiving, and as thou doſt abound towards us in goodneſs, ſo we may abound towards thee in obedience and love. And ſith (dear Father) thou art never weary of doing us good, notwitſtand all our unworthineſs,

neſs and naughtineſs, therefore let the conſideration of thy great mercy and fatherly kindneſs towards us, even as it were force our hearts, and compell us to come into thy moſt glorious preſence, with new ſongs of thankſgiving in our mouths. We pray thee (O moſt merciful God) to forgive all our unthankfulneſs, unkindneſs, profaneneſs, and great abuſing of all thy mercies, and eſpecially our abuſe and contempt of thy Goſpel, together with all other the ſins of our life, which we confeſs are innumerable, and more than can be reckoned up, both in omiſſion of good things, and commiſſion of evil. We moſt humbly entreat thee to ſet them all over to the reckoning which thy Son hath made up for them upon his Croſs, and never to lay any of them to our charge, but freely forget all, and forgive all. Nail down all our ſins and iniquities to the Croſs of Chriſt, bury them in his death, bathe them in his blood, hide them in his wounds, let them never riſe up in judgement againſt us. Set us free of the miſeries that are upon us for ſin, and keep back the judgements to come, both of ſoul, body, goods, and good name. Be reconciled to us in thy dear Son concerning all matters paſt; not once remembring or repeating to us our old and abominable iniquities, but accept us as righteous in him, imputing his righteouſneſs unto us, and our ſins unto him. Let his righteouſneſs ſatisfy thy Juſtice for all our unrighteouſneſs, his obedience for our diſobedience, his perfection for our imperfection. Moreover, we humbly beſeech thy good Majeſty to give us the true ſight and feeling of our manifold ſins, that we may not be blinded in them through delight, or hardned in them through cuſtom, as the reprobates are; but that we may be even weary of them, and much grieved for them, labouring and ſtriving by all poſſible means to get out of them. Good Father touch our hearts with true repentance for all ſin. Let not us take any delight or pleaſure in any ſin; but howſoever we fall through frailty (as we fall often) let us never fall finally, let us never lye down in ſin nor continue in ſin: but let us get upon our feet again, and turn

to

to thee with all our hearts, and ſeek thee while thou mayeſt be found, and whileſt thou doſt offer grace and mercy unto us. O Lord increaſe in us that true and lively faith, whereby we may lay ſure hold on thy Son Chriſt and reſt upon his merits altogether. Give us faith aſſuredly, to believe all thy great and precious promiſes made in the Goſpel, and ſtrengthen us from above to walk and abound in all the true and ſound fruits of faith. Let us walk, not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit. Let us feel the power of thy ſons death killing ſin in our mortal bodies, and the power of his reſurrection, raiſing us up to newneſs of life. Let us grow daily in the ſanctification of the ſpirit, and the mortification of the fleſh. Let us live holily, juſtly, and ſoberly in this preſent evil world, ſhewing forth the vertues of thee, in all our particular actions, that we may adorn our moſt holy profeſſion, and ſhine as lights in the midſt of a crooked and froward generation amongſt whom we live, being gainful to all by our lives and converſation, and offenſive to none. To this end we pray thee fill us with thy Spirit, and all ſpiritual graces, as love, wiſdom, patience, contentment, meekneſs, humility, temperance, chaſtity, kindneſs, and affability, and ſtir us up to uſe prayer and watchfulneſs, reading and meditation in thy Law, and all other good means, whereby we may grow and abound in all heavenly vertues. Bleſs us in the uſe of the means from day to day, make us ſuch as thou wouldſt have us to be, and ſuch as we deſire to be: work in us both will and deed, purpoſe and power: For thou, O Lord, art all in all, thou wilt have mercy upon whom thou wilt have mercy, and whom thou wilt thou hardneſt. Have mercy upon us therefore, (dear Father) and never leave us to our ſelves, nor to our own wills, luſts and deſires, but aſſiſt us with thy good Spirit, that we may continue to the end in a righteous courſe; that ſo at length we may be received into glory, and be partakers of that immortal Crown which thou haſt laid up for all that love thee, and truly call upon thee.

Further,

Further, we intreat thee, O heavenly Father, to give us all things neceſſary for this life; as food, raiment, health, peace, liberty, and ſuch freedom from thoſe manifold miſeries which we lye open unto every day, as thou ſeeſt meet. Bleſs unto us all the means which thou haſt put into our hands for the ſuſtenance of this frail life. Bleſs our ſtock and ſtore, corn and cattel, trades and occupations; and all works of our hands: for thy bleſſing only makes rich, and it bringeth no ſorrows with it. Give us therefore ſuch a competency and ſufficiency of theſe outward bleſſings, as thou in thy heavenly wiſdom ſeeſt moſt needful for us. Moreover we humbly beſeech thee (moſt loving Father) in great mercy look down from heaven upon thy whole church and every member of it. Be favourable unto *Sion*, and build up the walls of *Jeruſalem*. Behold with the eye of pity, the great ruines and deſolations of thy Church. Heal up the wounds, and make up the breaches thereof in all Nations. Regard it as thine own flock; tender it as thine own family; dreſs it as thine own vineyard; and love it as thine own Spouſe. Think thoughts of peace to it, and alwaies look upon it in deep compaſſion. Bleſs it with thy grace, guide it with thy Spirit, and defend it ſtill by thy mighty power: Scatter the deviſes confound the counſels, and overthrow the forces of all that fight againſt it. Specially we entreat thee dear Father, to ſet thy ſelf againſt that Antichriſt of *Rome*, that man of perdition, which ſetteth himſelf againſt thee, and againſt all thy people. In thine appointed time we pray thee give him a deadly downfall: Beat down all his power and authority dayly more and more; give free paſſage to thy Goſpel in all Kingdoms that *Babylon* may fall, and never riſe up again. The more the favourites and adherents of *Rome* labour to uphold their Idolatrous Kingdom, the more let it fall down: even as Dagon before the preſence of thine Ark. Pour down the Vials of the fulneſs of thy wrath upon the Kingdoms of the Beaſt; and let their Riches; wealth, credit, and authority, dry up every day more and more; as the River *Euphrates*. Let it pity thee, O

Fa-

Father, to ſee thine own Spouſe ſit as a deformed and forlorn woman here below; weeping and mourning with her hair about her neck; having loſt all her beauty and comlineſs. Chear her up (dear Father) glad her with the joy of thy countenance, and ſo deck her and trim her up, that thou mayeſt delight in her as a Bridegroom in his Bride. Specially we entreat thee have mercy upon thy Church in this land: intend good unto us and not evil. Give us not over into the hands of our cruel enemies, as our ſins have deſerved. Scatter we pray thee O Lord) the deviſes, and break the plots of all ſuch as have plotted the overthrow and utter ſubverſion of this Church and Commonwealth: Bleſs this Church more and more with the continuance of true Religion amongſt us, for thy great Names ſake, and infinite mercies ſake; deal graciouſly and favourably with us and our poſterity. Turn from us that vengeance which is due unto us for our ſins. For thou ſeeſt how iniquity prevaileth, and the wicked go away with the goal. Atheiſm overſpreadeth every where, and Popery ſeemeth to get a head again. Now therefore (dear Father) we moſt humbly beſeech thee to take order ſpeedily for the remedying and repreſſing of theſe manifold diſorders and grievous enormities that are amongſt us. Be entreated of thy poor children to be good to this *Engliſh* Nation. Hear the cries of thine Elect; hear the mourning of them that mourn in *Sion*. Let the cryes of thy children cry down all the crys of the ſins of the Land, and be reconciled unto us in the multitude of thy compaſſions, that ſo thou may'ſt ſtill continue a moſt merciful Protector of this thine *Engliſh* Vineyard. We pray thee (good Father) ſhew ſpecial mercies to our Governours: Bleſs and keep them all in their wayes; bleſs their Government unto us. Let thine Angels encamp about them, and let thy holy hand be alwaies over them: keep them from treaſons, and deliver them from the treacheries of their enemies: give them to ſee what belongs to their Peace, and give them a heart earneſtly bent to ſet upon the practice of the ſame: bleſs all our Counſellours, and give ſuch ſucceſs unto all

their counſels and policies in matters of State, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godlineſs and honeſty. Bleſs all the Nobility, work in them a care to glorifie thy Name in their places: make them faithful to thee, and faithful to the Land. Direct with thy good Spirit all ſuch as bear the Sword of Juſtice, that they may draw it out to puniſh the wicked, and to defend the godly; and that they may with all good care and conſcience diſcharge the duties of their places. Increaſe the number of faithful and zealous Miniſters in this Church. Send thy Goſpel to thoſe places where it is not, and bleſs it where it is. Remember them in thy mercy (O Lord) that are under any croſs or affliction whatſoever: be comfortable unto them, heal up their wounds, bind up their ſores, put all their tears into thy bottle, and make their bed in all their ſorrows, and put ſuch a good end to all their troubles, that they may redound to thy glory, and the furtherance of their own ſalvation. In the mean time give them patience and conſtancy, to bear whatſoever it ſhall pleaſe thy merciful hand to lay upon them. Laſt of all (in a word) we pray thee bleſs the Magiſtracy, Miniſtry, and Commonalty. Bleſs all thy people, do good to all that are true and upright in their hearts. And ſo (dear Father) we do commit and commend our ſelves, our ſouls and bodies into thy hands, for this day and the reſt of our life, praying thee to take care and charge of us. Keep us from all evil, watch over us for our good, let thine Angels encamp about us, let thy holy hand be over us, and keep us in all our waies, that we may live to thy praiſe and glory here on earth, keeping faith and a good conſcience in all our actions; that after this life we may be crowned of thee for ever in thy Kingdom. Grant theſe things (good Father) to us here preſent, and to all thine abſent, praying thee in ſpecial favour to remember all our friends and kinsfolks in the fleſh, all our good Neighbours and well-willers, and all thoſe for whom we are bound to pray, by nature, by deſerts, or any duty whatſoever, for Jeſus Chriſts ſake our alone Mediator: To whom with thee and the Holy Ghoſt, be given all praiſe and glory, both now and for evermore. Amen.

An

An Evening Prayer to be uſed in private FAMILIES.

O Eternal God, and moſt loving and dear Father, we thy unworthy children do here fall down at the foot of thy great Majeſty, acknowledging from our hearts, that we are altogether unworthy to come near thee, or to look towards thee, becauſe thou art a God of infinite glory, and we are moſt vile and abominable ſinners, ſuch as were conceived and born in ſin and corruption, and ſuch as have inherited our Fathers corruption, and alſo have actually tranſgreſſed all thy holy Statutes and Laws, both in thoughts, words and deeds, before we knew thee and ſince, ſecretly and openly, with our ſelves and with others: our particular ſins are more than can be numbred; for who knoweth how often he offendeth? But this we muſt needs confeſs againſt our ſelves, that our hearts are full of pride, coveteouſneſs, and the love of this world, full of wrath anger, and impatience; full of lying, diſſembling and deceiving; full of vanity, hardneſs, and profaneſs; full of infidelity, diſtruſt and ſelf-love; full of luſt, uncleanneſs, and all abominable deſires: yea, our hearts are the very ſinks of ſin, and dunghils of all filthineſs. And beſides; all this we do omit the good things we ſhould do; for there are in us great wants of faith, of love, of zeal, of patience, of contentment, and of every good grace; ſo as thou haſt juſt cauſe to proceed to ſintence of judgment againſt us as moſt damnable tranſgreſſors of all thy holy Commandments; yea, ſuch as ſunk in our rebellions, and have many times and often committed high treaſon againſt thy Majeſty; and therefore thou mayeſt juſtly caſt us all down into hel-fire, there to be tormented with ſatan and his angels for ever. And we have nothing to except againſt thy Majeſty for ſo doing, ſith therein thou ſhouldeſt deal with us but according to equity, and our deſerts. Wherefore (dear Father) we do appeal from thy juſtice to thy mercy, moſt humbly intreating thee to have mercy upon us, and freely to forgive us all our ſins paſt whatſoever; both new and old, ſecret and open, known and unknown; and that

for Jesus Christs sake our alone Mediator. And we pray thee touch our hearts with true grief and unfeigned repentance for them, that they may be a continual sorrow and heart-smart unto us; so as nothing may grieve us more than this, that we have offended thee, being our special friend and Father: Give us therefore (dear Father) every day more and more sight and feeling of our sins, with true humiliation under the same. Give us also that true and lively Faith, whereby we may lay sure hold on thy Son Christ and all his merits, applying the same to our own souls, so as we may stand fully perswaded, that whatsoever he hath done upon the cross, he hath done for us particularly, as well as for others. Give us faith (good Father) constantly to believe all the sweet promises of the Gospel, touching remission of sin, and eternal life, made in thy Son Christ, O Lord, increase our faith that we may altogether rest upon thy promises, which are Yea and Amen. Yea, that we may settle our selves and all that we have wholly upon them; both our souls, bodies, goods, names, wives, children, and our whole estate: knowing that all things depend upon thy promises, power and providence, and that thy word doth support and bear up the whole order of Nature. Moreover, we entreat thee (O Lord) to strengthen us from above, to walk in every good way; and to bring forth the fruits of true faith in all our particular actions, studying to please thee in all things, and to be fruitful in good works; that we may shew forth unto all men by our good conversation, whose children we are: and that we may adorn and beautifie our most holy profession, by walking in a Christian course, and in all the sound fruit and practise of godliness and true Religion. To this end we pray thee sanctifie our hearts by thy Spirit yet more and more; sanctifie our souls and bodies and all our corrupt natural faculties, as reason, understanding, will and affections, so as they may be fitted for thy worship and service; taking a delight and pleasure therein. Stir us up to use prayer, watchfulness, reading, meditation in thy Law, and all other good means, whereby we may profit in grace and goodness from day to day. Bless us in the use of the means, that we may dayly die

to

to ſin, and live to righteouſneſs: draw us yet nearer unto thee, help us againſt our manifold wants. Amend our great imperfections; renew us inwardly more and more repair the ruines of our hearts: Aid us againſt the remnants of ſin. Enlarge our hearts to run the way of thy Commandments, direct all our ſteps in thy Word, let none iniquity have dominion over us. Aſſiſt us againſt our ſpecial infirmities and maſter-ſins, that we may get the victory over them all, to thy glory, and the great peace and comfort of our own conſciences. Strengthen us (good Father) by thy grace and holy Spirit, againſt the common corruptions of the world; as pride, whoredom, covetouſneſs, contempt of the Goſpel; ſwearing, lying, diſſembling, and deceiving. O dear Father, let us not be overcome of theſe filthy vices; nor any other ſinful pleaſures and fond delights, wherewith thouſands are carryed headlong to deſtruction. Arm our ſouls againſt all the temptations of this world, the Fleſh and the Devil, that we may overcome them all through thy help, and keep on the right way to life, that we may live in thy fear, and dye in thy favour; that our laſt daies may be our beſt days; and that we may end in great peace of conſcience.

Furthermore (dear Father) we intreat thee not only for our ſelves, but for all our good Brethren, thy dear children, ſcattered over the face of the whole Earth, moſt humbly beſeeching thee to bleſs them all; to chear them up, and glad them with the joy of thy countenance, both now and alwaies. Guide them all in thy fear, and keep them from evil, that they may praiſe thy name. In theſe dangerous daies, and declining times, we pray thee (O Lord*) raiſe up nurſing Fathers, and nurſing Mothers unto thy Church. Raiſe up alſo faithful Paſtors, that thy Cauſe may be carried forward, truth may prevail, Religion may proſper; thy name only may be ſet up in the Earth; thy Sons Kingdom advanced; and thy will accompliſhed. Set thy ſelf againſt all adverſary power, ſpecially that of* Rome, Antichriſt, Idolatry, *and* Atheiſm; *curſe and croſs all their council, fruſtrate their devices ſcatter their Forces, overthrow their Armies. When they are moſt wiſe, let them be moſt fooliſh; when they are moſt ſtrong, let them be moſt weak. Let them know that*

there is no wiſdom nor counſel, power nor policy againſt thee the Lord of Hoſts. Let them know that Iſrael *hath a God, and that thou which art called Jehovah, art the only Ruler over all the world. Ariſe therefore (O moſt mighty God) and maintain thine own cauſe againſt all thine enemies, ſmite through all their loins, and bow down their backs; yea, let them all be confounded, and turned backward that bear ill will unto Sion. Let the patient abiding of the Righteous be joy, and let the wicked be diſappointed of their hope. But of all favour, we intreat thee (O Lord) to ſhew ſpecial mercy to thy Church in this Land wherein we live. Continue thy Goſpel among us yet with greater ſucceſs; purge thy houſe dayly more and more, take away all things that offend. Let this Nation ſtill be a place where thy name may be called upon, and an harbour for thy Saints. Shew mercy to our poſterity (dear Father) and have care of them, that thy Goſpel may be left unto them as a moſt holy inheritance. Defend us againſt foreign Invaſion, keep out Idolatry and Popery from amongſt us. Turn from us thoſe plagues which our ſins cry for, for the ſins of this Land are exceeding great, horrible and outragious; and give thee juſt cauſe to make us ſpectacles of thy vengeance to all Nations; that by how much the more thou haſt lifted us up in great mercy and long peace; by ſo much the more thou ſhouldſt preſs us down in great wrath and long War. Therefore (dear Father) we moſt humbly intreat thee, for thy great Names ſake, and for thy infinite mercies ſake that thou wouldeſt be reconciled to this Land, and diſcharge it of all the horrible ſins thereof. Drown them (O Lord) in thy infinite mercy, through Chriſt, as it were in a bottomleſs Gulph: that they may never riſe up in judgment againſt us. For although our ſins be exceeding many and fearful, yet thy mercy is far greater. For thou art infinite in mercy, but we cannot be infinite in ſinning: Give us not over into the hands of the Idolaters, leſt they ſhould blaſpheme thy Name, and ſay, Where is their God in whom they truſted? But rather, dear Father, take us into thine own hands, and correct us according to thy wiſdom, for with thee is mercy and deep compaſſion. Moreover, we moſt heartily be-*

beſeech thy good Majeſty to bleſs all that are in authority over us, counſel them from above, yet them take advice of the in all things, that they may both conſult and reſolve of ſuch courſes as may be moſt for thy glory, the good of the Church, and peace of this our Commonwealth. Bleſs the Nobility, and all the Magiſtrates of the Land, giving them all grace to execute Judgment and Juſtice, and to maintain truth and equity. Bleſs all the faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel, increaſe the number of them, increaſe the gifts in them, and ſo bleſs all their labours in their ſeveral places and Congregations, that they all may be inſtruments of thy hand to enlarge thy Sons Kingdom, and to win many unto thee. Comfort the comfortleſs with all needful comforts. Forget none of thine that are in trouble, but as their afflictions are, ſo let the joys and comforts of thy Spirit be unto them, and ſo ſanctifie unto all thine their afflictions and troubles, that they may tend to thy glory and their own good. Give us thankful hearts for all thy mercies both ſpiritual and corporal, for thou art very merciful unto us in the things of this life, and infinitely more merciful in the things of a better life. Let us deeply ponder and weigh all thy particular favours towards us, that by the due conſideration thereof, our hearts may be gained yet neerer unto thee, and that therefore we may both love and obey thee, becauſe thou art ſo kind and loving unto us, that even thy love toward us may draw our loves towards thee, and that becauſe mercy is with thee, thou mayeſt be feared. Grant theſe things (good Father) and all other needful Graces for our ſouls or bodies, or any of thine theoughout the whole world, for Jeſus Chriſt's ſake: in whoſe Name we further call upon thee, as he hath taught us in his Goſpel, ſaying:

Our Father which art in Heaven, *&c.*

A Prayer to be uſed at any time, by one alone privately.

O Lord my God and Heavenly Father, I thy moſt unworthy child do here in thy ſight freely confeſs that I am a moſt ſinful creature; and damnable tranſgreſſour of all thy holy Laws and Commandments: that as I was born and bred in ſin, and ſtained in the womb, ſo have I continually brought forth the corrupt and ugly fruits of that infection and contagion wherein I was firſt conceived, both in thoughts, words and works: If I ſhould go about to reckon up my particular offences, I know not where to begin, or where to make an end, For they are more than the hairs of my head; yea, far more than I can poſſibly feel or know. For who knoweth the heighth and depth of his corruption? Who knoweth how oft he offendeth? Thou only, O Lord, knoweſt my ſins, who knoweſt my heart; nothing is hid from thee, thou knoweſt what I have been, and what I am, yea, my conſcience doth accuſe me of many and grievous evils, and I do dayly feel by woful experience how frail I am, how prone to evil, and how untoward unto all goodneſs. My mind is full of vanity, my heart full of profaneneſs, mine affections full of deadneſs, dulneſs, drowſineſs in matters of thy worſhip and ſervice: Yea, my whole ſoul is full of ſpiritual blindneſs, hardneſs, unprofitableneſs, coldneſs and ſecurity. And in very deed, I am altogether a lump of ſin, and a maſs of all miſery, and therefore I have forfeited thy favour, incurred thy high diſpleaſure, and have given thee juſt cauſe to frown upon me, to give me over, and leave me to mine own corrupt will and affections. But (O my dear Father) I have learned from thy mouth, that thou art a God full of mercy, ſlow to wrath, of great compaſſion and kindneſs toward all ſuch as groan under the burthen of their ſins. Therefore extend thy great mercy towards

wards me poor ſinner, and give me a general pardon for all mine offences whatſoever: ſeal it in the blood of thy Son, and ſeal it to my conſcience by thy ſpirit, aſſuring me more and more of thy love and favour towards me, and that thou art a reconciled Father unto me. Grant that I may all time to come love thee much, becauſe much is given, and of very love fear thee, and obey thee. O Lord, increaſe my faith, that I may ſtedfaſtly believe all the promiſes of the Goſpel made in thy Son Chriſt, and reſt upon them altogether. Enable me to bring forth the ſound fruits of faith and repentance in all my particular actions. Fill my ſoul full of joy and peace in believing. Fill me full of inward comfort, and ſpiritual ſtrength againſt all temptations: give me yet a greater feeling of thy love, and manifold mercies toward me? work in my ſoul a love of thy Majeſty, a zeal of thy Glory, and hatred of all evil, and a deſire of all good things. Give me victory over thoſe ſins, which thou knoweſt are ſtrongeſt in me. Let me once at laſt make a conqueſt of the world and the fleſh. Mortifie in me whatſoever is carnal: ſanctifie me throughout by thy Spirit: knit my heart to thee for ever, that I may fear thy name: renew in me the image of thy Son Chriſt, daily more and more. Give me a delight in the reading and meditating of thy word. Let me rejoyce in the publick Miniſtry thereof. Let me love and reverence all the faithful Miniſters of thy Goſpel. Sanctifie their doctrines to my conſcience, ſeal them in my ſoul, write them in my heart, give me a ſoft and melting heart, that I may tremble at thy words, and be alwaies much affected with godly Sermons. Let not my ſins hold back thy mercies from me, nor mine unworthineſs ſtop the paſſage of thy Grace. Open mine eyes to ſee the great wonders of thy Law. Reveal thy ſecrets unto me; be open-hearted toward me thy unworthy ſervant. Hide nothing from me, that may make for thy glory, and the good of my ſoul. Bleſs all means unto me which thou uſeſt for my good. Bleſs all holy inſtructions unto my ſoul.

Bleſs

Bleſs me at all times, both in hearing and reading of thy Word. Give me the right uſe of all thy mercies and corrections, that I may be the better for them. Let me abound in love to thy children. Let my heart be very nearly knit unto them, that where thou loveſt moſt, there I may love moſt alſo. Let me watch and pray that I enter not into temptation; give me patience and contentment in all things. Let me love thee more and more, and the world leſs and leſs. So draw my mind upward, that I map deſpiſe all tranſitory things. Let me be ſo wrapt and raviſhed with the ſight and feeling of heavenly things that I may make a baſe reckoning of all earthly things. Let me uſe this world as though I uſed it not. Let me uſe it but for neceſſity, as meat and drink. Let me not be carryed away with the vain pleaſures and fond delights thereof. Good Father work the good work in me, and never leave me nor forſake me; till thou haſt brought me to true happineſs. Oh dear Father, make me faithful in my calling, that I may ſerve thee in it, and be alwaies careful to do what good I may in any thing. Bleſs me in my outward eſtate. Bleſs my ſoul, body, goods, and name. Bleſs all that belong unto me. Bleſs my goings out, and comings in. Let thy countenance be lifted up upon me, now and always, chear me up with the joys and comforts of thy ſpirit, make me thankful for all thy mercies. For I muſt needs confeſs that thou art very kind to me in all things. For in thee I live, move, and have my being; of thee I have my welfare and good being; thou art a daily friend, and ſpecial good benefactor unto me. I live at thy coſt and charges, I hold all of thee in chief, and I find that thou art never weary of doing me good, thy goodneſs towards me is unchangeable. Oh, I can never be thankful enough unto thee for all thy mercies both ſpiritual and corporal. But in ſuch meaſure as I am able, I graiſe thy Name for all, beſeeching thee to accept of my thankſgiving in thy Son Chriſt; and to give me a profitable uſe of all thy favours, that thereby my heart may be fully drawn unto thee. Give

me

me, O Father, to be of ſuch a good nature and diſpoſition, that I may be won by gentleneſs, and fair means, as much as if thou gaveſt me many laſhes. Pardon all mine unthankfulneſs, unkindneſs, and great abuſing of thy mercies, and give me grace to uſe them more to thy glory in all time to come. Strengthen me, dear Father, thus to continue praiſing and glorifying thy Name here upon earth, that after this life I may be crowned of thee for ever in thy Kingdom. Grant theſe Petitions, moſt merciful God, not only to me but to all thy dear children throughout the whole world, for Jeſus Chriſt's ſake: in whoſe name I do further call upon thee, ſaying as he hath taught me, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, &c.

FINIS.

Imprimatur
ex Æd. Lambeth
29. *Sept.* 1663.

G. Stradling. S.T.P.
Rev. in Chriſto Pat. D.
Gilb. Archiep. Cant. a
ſac. Domeſtic.